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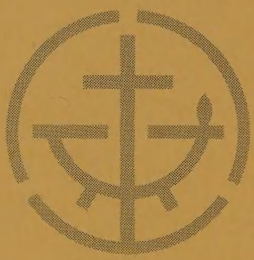

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CHURCH DIVISIONS AND CHRISTIANITY

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BY

WILLIAM LEIGHTON GRANE

PREBENDARY OF CHICHESTER, AUTHOR OF "HARD SAYINGS OF JESUS CHRIST," "THE PASSING OF WAR," ETC.

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PREFACE

In the Hulsean Lectures for 1913—delivered but not published—I attempted to set in strong relief the Unifying Power of the Christianity of Christ, and then to illustrate and urge its application in certain regions remarkable for lack of unity. In the pre-war world there were three spheres of life conspicuous for its absence. We saw the Divisive spirit in full possession of Christendom itself—both Catholic and Reformed. We found it fomenting social and industrial strife. We feared it in those antichristian Inter-State relations which threatened the relapse into barbarism so soon to occur.

Of these three scenes of failure the first is, from the Christian point of view, fundamental; because it relates to the very Body of Christ—the Organism created to be the guardian and dispenser of His Spirit. But this vital subject, by the limits of my Hulsean scheme, was condemned to fragmentary treatment in a single lecture, which seemed so inadequate to its urgency that I have devoted this book to its development.

My hope is that some neglected facts here brought forward may help to divert the Anglican mind from aims and hopes abundantly proved to be illusive; while quickening efforts that march with the primary mission of a National Church, and also harmonise with the notable movement now stirring Nonconformist Churches to a great endeavour after federal unity.

But my appeal is to all communions of the Faith of Christ, whether Catholic or Protestant. It is made under the strongest sense of the cardinal importance of the whole subject of reunion; for some striking reduction of the barriers between separated Churches (founded on a re-valuation of relative values) appears to be the one specific for the weak and weakening hold of every form of systematic Christianity upon the world. The venture is encouraged by signs that point to a certain *change of mind* in many quarters, disposing men to prefer reality and truth before custom and tradition, and to claim a new precedence for the things that matter most, after a manner habitual with the Founder of our Faith.

The Life, the Death, the Teaching of Jesus Christ were manifestly germinal—an immortal Seed destined to eternal growth; manifestly also redemptive —a Tree of Life intended for the healing of the nations. The Love of Christ, His Sacrifice, His Words of living light endued the world with a new

Principle—a Power always making for Unity. Upon its dominance hangs the coming of God's Kingdom ; justice and progress fail with its decline ; misery and pain attend its fall ; an admirable heroism battles and endures for its supremacy in every sphere—religious, social, international.

Victory for this principle, dominion for this power (except perhaps within the realm of Science), seem scarcely anywhere in sight. But the despondent should recollect two things : (1) the youngness of the Christian Faith ; (2) the feebleness of its hitherto attempted application. The span of years we designate A.D. is next to nothing compared with those vast ages which saw man slowly come to himself during a dim and distant past. To our short sight, and shorter lives, the ways and work of the Eternal must needs appear mysteriously, almost intolerably, slow. To bear this in mind, and also to remember that never yet on any commanding scale has the Christianity of Christ been actually tried, is to kill despair and complacency together. Then the clamant cry of human need sounds like the voice of God for all who have ears to hear, calling the Churches to a re-examination of traditional grounds for estrangement and urging the sacrifice of what is doubtfully essential, that the scattered forces of the Spirit may everywhere be re-combined in unity and strength.

Even current events will never of themselves

persuade the world that Civilisation *minus* Christ can only spell destruction. Nor will the testing yet to come, in the form of drastic social reconstruction, prove other than a fresh disaster, unless in the hour of trial a new and genuinely Christian spirit is found in possession of every class in the community. But how can we look, in such crises, for efficacious help from institutional religion without some radical change in the whole attitude and relation of Christian Churches towards each other? A great house not only divided but divided against itself makes a stammering herald for the gospel of universal brotherhood. Nothing is going to stop that gospel in the time to come; but it is up to the Churches to lead the way: and precept will not count without example. Never were the doors of the world wider open to the whole Church of Christ than at this turning point of human affairs; for men were never more alive than now to the dire need of Unity in every domain of life. But we cannot expect them to believe in the mission of Christendom to bring a blessing to mankind which it is unwilling or unable to win for itself.

W. LEIGHTON GRANE.

September, 1916.

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CHURCH DIVISIONS AND CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER I

THE IDEAL FORSAKEN

THE Disunion in the Christian Church and the fierce fighting in the nominally Christian world with which we are now so familiar seem at first sight to be fatal to the thesis that the Personality and the Principles of Jesus Christ provide the world with a Unifying Power competent to appease its antagonisms and assuage its unrest. For if this be true, it is certainly reasonable to look for the most conspicuous illustration of the truth among those who profess and call themselves Christians. Were we, however, to confine our purview to primitive Christianity, the witness would not disappoint us; hence the inference is fair that

modern failures are traceable, not to any defect in the principles and spirit of Christ's Religion, but to faults in their embodiment and in the Organisation entrusted with the stewardship of their influence. For beyond all question, one of the chief secrets of the unparalleled progress of the early Church was the striking spectacle of the unity of its fellowship. The contemporary comment—"See how these Christians love one another" passed into a proverb. Here at all events were folk who had grasped the essential spirit of Christ's teaching and become possessed by its unifying power. In *The Acts* they are described as "of one heart and of one soul"; and we know that this inward grace distinguished their community long after they ceased to "have all things common" in a material sense.

Of the will of our Lord in this regard none can affect to be in doubt. His continual emphasis on Love as the supreme law of life involves the essential idea, not indeed of uniformity, but of unity. And all He said upon the matter, so far as our records go, accords with the burden of His Eucharistic prayer—"that they all may be One, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee." It was the plain intention of our Lord that men might always be able to say: "A Religion which unites its adherents in one fellowship and holds the Society closely together without coercion, by virtue

of one animating Spirit, bears the impress of truth and divinity." Contrariwise, He has given us to understand that ecclesiastical divisions and a multiplicity of separate organisations will produce the opposite impression—will become a scandal and a stumbling-block, and furnish occasion for serious doubt as to the truth of Christianity. To realise this, as Döllinger used to say, one has only to question some educated Jew as to what impression the strife and controversy of Christian Churches make upon him.

Far more than we commonly think, men doubt the Message of the Gospel because the evidence they most need is hidden from them both by the ordinary conduct of professing Christians *and* by their disunion. That incontrovertible "epistle known and read of all men" in the consistent life is rare; and that other witness extolled by St. Paul—One Body testifying to One Spirit—has long disappeared. There is no unanswerable catholic testimony of human lives linked in true membership, moved with a single inspiration, possessed by one idea. There is no one flock under the One Shepherd;—only countless folds unconnected even by "the bond of peace," each claiming to hold the field, and each seeking to extend the wattles of its own pen as the one enclosure immune from heretical wolves and a nameless future fate. There is, except in hymns, no one army of the

Church of God; only a disorganised array of separate battalions, each prepared to fight for its own sectional Christianity but unable to move in combination to convert the world. The Kingdom of God proclaimed by Christ cannot thus be realised; and any attempt to bound that Kingdom by the confines of any particular Church now known to the world can only accentuate division.

In brief, the general aspect of Christendom to-day presents a picture of Disunion at once complete enough to justify the philosophic observer[1] who declares Religion, "intended to be the great Unifier," to have become "the great Divider of mankind;" and also the scientific historian[2] who urges—"it would be a greater service to humanity, on philosophical as well as on religious grounds, to contribute the smallest unit towards the Reunion of Christendom than to construct the most perfect demonstration of the free personality of man. As things are, errors may be laboriously confuted; but amidst the energies and aspirations of a regenerated and united Christendom they would spontaneously pass away."

In what way, then, should every Christian—whether he call himself Catholic or Protestant or both together—set about to contribute his unit to this consummation? For we are plainly con-

[1] Arthur Balfour. [2] Goldwin Smith.

fronted here with no mere matter of expediency, but with an act of plain obedience, since "the Divine purpose of visible unity among Christians is a fact of Revelation."

Our first endeavour must be to saturate ourselves with the idea of unity, until we are thoroughly convinced of its beauty and power. It is only by the steady propagation of Unity as an Ideal that we can hope to generate the passionate enthusiasm needed to cope with the overwhelming obstacles to its realisation. We may be sure that "if there is a great change coming in the action of a generation, it will be preceded by a change in ideals. For some centuries we have held ideals of Church polity which steered us away from Reunion. If this generation is going towards Reunion, there must be a change somewhere in ideals."

Those pointed sentences (from a Charge by the Bishop of Bombay) indicate the root cause of the difference between the whole tone, temper and attitude of the united Church of the First Days and those of the divided Church of to-day. It is a difference of Ideal. That is what is critical; that is what counts; because it involves principle. And to recover the forsaken ideal is a necessary preliminary to any possibility of its embodiment. At the beginning, nothing save truth appeared so vitally important. Unity indeed was held

in equal honour, as witness and guarantor of truth. The Church's Founder made fundamental the principle of putting first things first. Early Christendom adhered to that principle, and remained one. Later Christendom did not, and became divided. Modern Christendom does not; and until in this respect it changes it cannot reunite. Each part now magnifies itself in positive opposition to every other. Even our ideals of Church polity "steer us away from Reunion." The great House divided against itself cannot but go on failing till it falls.

In view of the eventual formation of an Indian Church it is relevant to add to the episcopal words just quoted the following sentence from Professor Rudra, significant of the trend of enlightened native Christian thought: "India will go straight to the fountain-head, not further down the stream where controversies have disturbed the clear waters. India will form her own Church, and express Christ in her own terms."[1]

May it not be well for us too in honesty and humbleness of mind to take this journey up the long stream with its tortuous ecclesiastical windings, till we sit at the feet of those whom the right view still governed. It is sad to reflect how far we have to go back in order to find the true Ideal of Unity in possession of the whole Christian Body, however the Monasticism of a later age realised it in part.

[1] Cited in the *Student Movement Magazine*, Jan., 1911.

One aspect of that great system undoubtedly reveals it as a refuge for the idealist and mystic—a refuge without which the Catholic Church would have suffered far more from sub-division than it has. But to see Christian unity exemplified in the whole Society we must go back to our very earliest records.

Although the great Schism of East and West was not formally registered for twelve hundred years, the seeds of disunion which then fructified were sown centuries before. Therefore we had better turn at once to the beginning. The secret of early success and later failure is no mystery. Devotion to Christ's principles interpreted in the truth and freedom of the Spirit preserved unity. Neglect of those principles destroyed it.

The picture of the Church of the First Age, whether within or without the New Testament, shows us a Society distinguished by undivided loyalty to Christ—not only putting truth first as He did, but striving to see it all round with His mind. Its leaders emphasised what He had stressed; and on the things for which Christ had no care His Body set no store. While the spell of the Master was still strong, each member felt himself knit to the Founder with a closeness which the greatest teachers of the community delighted to describe in the strongest terms. The quick sense of this spiritual union with the One Head of every

member baptised into the Faith, while it remained vivid and clear, could not fail to unify. The emphasis of the Lord, and the main idea of His own metaphor, so full of power and beauty—"I am the Vine, ye are the branches," are carried on, if with less charm yet with no less vigour, in the favourite figure of St. Paul—"As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members being many are one body, so also is the Christ."

Nowhere does Pauline teaching more clearly combine with the entire testimony of his life to reiterate and reinforce the principles of Christ than in this continual insistence on the necessity of unity. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, are *all* parts existing for the service of the whole—"for the building of the body, till we all come . . . . to a perfect Man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ." Sometimes, to bring out more aptly the idea of a progress and expansion yet to be fulfilled, the figure changes to a holy Temple of the Lord not yet complete; but in either case the elements of human activity and divine increase, always working for unity, are constant. To preserve this good, no sacrifice save that of truth is to be grudged. Every man's whole store of humility, forbearance and love is to be exhausted in eagerness "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." When the curse of partisanship appears among the seething

medley of Corinthian converts, their Father in God cries out in indignation—"Is Christ divided?" To Paul it was a thing unthinkable, impossible; "for indeed in One Spirit were we all baptized into One Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free." He saw that Christianity involved the embodiment of the unseen Christ in a visible society through which His work in the world was to be done. Except by the continuous manifestation only possible through a living organism Paul felt that the witness most needed by the world would fail, and the inherent power of the Gospel would be largely lost.

Nor was this view at all peculiarly Pauline. It prevailed throughout the whole Apostolate. To St. Peter catholicity of mind would come less easily than to one who combined with his Hebrew parentage a knowledge of Greek culture and the enlarging experience of Roman citizenship. But St. Peter might have said with no less truth than St. Paul—"I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." The incident of Cornelius fastened in his mind for ever that great principle of the Master—made so clear by His treatment of the ancient institution of the Sabbath—that *Truth is to be interpreted in terms of human need.* Peter therefore at once adopts the wider outlook, and begins to support the generous policy on which not then only, but in every later crisis, the effective life of Christianity as a power in

the world has depended. Thus the Christianity of this man of rock was a unifying principle—a means whereby the "living stones must be built up into a spiritual house," that the Chief Corner-stone may not be shamed. The Apostle humbly "followed in the steps" of the great "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls" long before he came to the same Cross. Though it was by no means the grace most natural to Peter's character, he so made Humility the girdle of his zeal that he was able also to make Love the crown of his wisdom. And the sequence of his thought glides straight from urging sound-mindedness—σωφρονήσατε—to the necessity—πρὸ πάντων—of "being fervent in your love among yourselves."

As it was with St. Peter and St. Paul, so with all these first Chiefs of the Church. The same combination of love and a sound mind dictates the judgment of St. James, President of the Jerusalem Council, reported in Acts xv. Moreover, that essentially Christian judgment, reducing for the Gentile converts to its lowest point the "burden of necessary things," is presented as the verdict of the whole assembly "having come to one accord," and being confident of the concurrence of the Holy Ghost. And since those first-fruits of the Spirit —Love, Joy, Peace—always reign together, we are not surprised at the "rejoicing" in the Church of Antioch which welcomed the liberal decision.

Here, then, we have the Ideal realised in practice —the original governing thought still in possession. The picture is of men actuated wholly by One Spirit, banded together to leaven the world with the Gospel of the Love of God manifested in all Christ was and said and did, from the Manger to the Cross. Through His revelation of the Father, inimitable and unique, the great principle of human brotherhood had become part and parcel of their thought and life. "Churchmanship" meant for them, as it should mean for us, a binding intensification of the feeling of *Fellowship* in Christ. With this uniting bond of sentiment—an infinitely deeper thing than any barren uniformity of opinion —they knew how to practise that tolerant comprehensiveness which was destined all too soon after the Apostolic age to disappear from the Church.

To pass from the New Testament writings to early patristic literature has been likened to the change in leaving some Eastern city in the desert from which the traveller suddenly passes by a single step into a barren waste. Though this is an exaggeration, the contrast is certainly most marked; and the picture of the ideal on which we have been dwelling is soon blurred. Nevertheless, all three of the Bishops—Ignatius, Irenaeus, and Cyprian—who (along with the more brilliant Clement of Alexandria and Origen) exerted the

greatest influence over the Church of the first three centuries—were as tireless in their insistence on unity as the Apostles themselves, though they often attempted to protect it unwisely.

Ignatius, the second, or—if St. Peter be included—the third Bishop of Antioch, as he passed through Asia Minor and Macedonia, in the charge of ten soldiers, on his way to Martyrdom at Rome, wrote those famous Letters to the Churches which contain the most uncompromising, not to say extravagant, language about episcopacy to be found in early Christian literature. Indeed the lack of apostolic moderation in these letters was felt to be so much more suited to the hierarchical passions of a later age that their genuineness was long denied. But strong words are natural to a fiery spirit, and they no doubt appeared to Ignatius as the best means available in a dangerously critical time to further the cause to which he was passionately devoted. "I myself sought," he tells us, "to do my own part as a man perfectly fitted into unity." Again, he cries aloud, as in the terms of some ancient prophet: "The Spirit proclaimed, and said—'Cherish Union; shun divisions.'" It was this consuming zeal for Christian Unity and for the purity of the Gospel which fired the tongue of this heroic man on the subject of episcopal status, all unconscious how his words would help to lay the train for later ecclesiastical

developments tending in the contrary direction to that at which he aimed. We must keep in mind the character of the speaker, with its touch of phantasy and flame showing in his fierce avidity for martyrdom, and also the recent severance of personal and local bonds of Christian union—such as the passing of the personal disciples of the Lord and the destruction of the mother city of Christendom—if we are to gauge aright Ignatius' burning words.

Many Asiatic Christians had begun to celebrate the Holy Communion in haphazard gatherings rather than in the central congregation as became members of one great body. Like some old war-horse scenting danger, the devoted leader sought to end a loose habit at the fountain-head of Christian worship by eagerly grasping the external safeguard nearest to his hand, exhorting all Church members to gather dutifully round their appointed officers organised in a compact body of three orders—the Bishop at the head—the Presbytery or College of Elders who formed his advisory Council—and the Deacons, who were chiefly occupied in arrangements for the relief of the poorer members of the Church. "Give heed to your bishop, that God may give heed to you. I give my life for those who are obedient to the bishop, to presbyters, to deacons. With them may I have my portion in the presence of God."[1] Or again, "Do ye all follow the bishop

[1] *Polyc.* 6.

as Jesus Christ followed the Father."[1] It is, of course, in the light of the simple conditions of the early Community, with our own monarchical associations with the episcopate totally excluded, that we must listen to Ignatius insisting that those "live a life after Christ who obey the bishop as Jesus Christ,"[2] or that "we ought to regard the bishop as the Lord Himself."[3] It all sounds to modern ears fantastically unbalanced, tinged with fanatical weakness for a single idea; but we must have before our eyes the Ignatian picture of the primitive Eucharist, with the presiding Presbyter or Bishop as central figure of the group, *in loco Christi;* we must have in our minds the peculiar peril of the Church, the kind of danger to be countered, and the spirit of the age, if we are to be fair to this Greatheart of old time. It is ill work to carp at the phrases of one who stood as a bulwark for the Faith in such days as we cannot even imagine without hard intellectual effort—one, too, whose devoted offering of life itself seems to have been given to obtain respite from persecution for his flock.[4] Here at least was an heroic Shepherd of the Church; but with the future hidden from his ken, and with his great office so idealised in his mind that it appeared to offer the surest hope of restoring or preserving the unity he most desired.

[1] *Smyrn.* 8, cf. *Magn.* 7. [2] *Trall.* 2. [3] *Ephes.* 6.
[4] Cf. Westcott's *The Two Empires*, p. 70.

It was fidelity, not arrogance, that made him place an extreme reliance on the safeguard afforded by the organised order of external fellowship. The terms Ignatius used were chiefly unfortunate because they served in later ages to excuse prelatical excesses totally foreign to his own conception of episcopal leadership. "Vindicate thine office with all diligence," he might write to the Bishop of Smyrna, yet he did not fail to add, "*and do thou nothing without the consent of God.*"[1]

Before taking leave of Ignatius, let us recall two points which need to be remembered together. The first is that this doughty champion of episcopacy and orders says never a word to show that he regards the Christian Ministry as a sacerdotal office. As Lightfoot insists, this father never once appeals to sacerdotal claims, though such an appeal would plainly have strengthened his case. Therefore, "if it be ever safe to take the sentiments of an individual writer as expressing the belief of his age, we may infer from the silence which pervades these letters that the sacerdotal view of the ministry had not yet found its way into the Christian Church."[2] The second point is that however the exaggerated importance which came to be attached to external organisation lessened the creative spontaneity essential to the power of a spiritual community; however it paved

[1] *Polyc.* 1 and 4. [2] Lightfoot: *Philippians*, p. 257.

the way for the destruction of free manifestations of Christian life—for the gradual supersession of the prophet in the priest, and for the absorption of the charismatic ministry in the regularised hierarchy; yet organisation was increasingly required as the churches became numerous. For relations between these small religious societies would have become impossible unless they had an accredited representative entitled to act for them. Indeed the evolution of the *episcopos* from among the *presbuteroi* was such a practical necessity that so unbiassed a witness as Renan thinks it incontestable that "without episcopacy the churches which were drawn together by the recollections of Jesus would have been dispersed again. . . . Christianity would have come to an end, like so many sects unable to withstand the forces of time."[1]

The mischief arose later, with the magnification of the Bishop not only as sole successor of the Apostles, but as sole channel of a mechanically transmitted grace. Gradually this successional apostolicity, wrongly interpreted, destroyed the authority of the Community, and the universal Church became a sort of episcopal oligarchy, holding synods, censuring and deciding, and constituting itself the real sovereign power over the whole body. The old Unity of the Spirit was weakened and

[1] *Origins of Christianity*, Bk. vi., p. 50.

shrivelled by a perversion of the very means organised to preserve it. It came to pass in this connection, as in so many others, that the Organisation created to perpetuate an Idea develops a strangling pressure upon its life.

IRENAEUS, Bishop of Lyons at the end of the second century, was a very different type of man from Ignatius. Not only the several particular instances of his intervention, but his whole career justifies his name of Εἰρηναῖος,—Peaceful. He loves to dwell upon the unity of the life of faith as willed by God, and to enlarge on the charisma, "the grace of truth." In the interest of the unity of the Church he wrote his chief work in refutation of Gnostic ideas, which—with other literary labour now largely lost—gave him a leading place in Ante-Nicene theology. Tertullian calls him "a most curious explorer of all kinds of learning;" but he was much more than that. As a very interesting fragment, lately brought to light by two Armenian scholars, has shown—in what is probably the oldest catechism extant—he was not only versed in abstruse theological lore, but was skilled in the presentment of fundamental Christianity so as to interest the lay mind. Whether or not he actually wrote the famous and beautiful Epistle sent by the Gallic Confessors to the Bishop of Rome on the subject of the Montanists, this "pearl of the Christian literature of the second

century" undoubtedly breathes the spirit of the great Bishop of Lyons and witnesses to his influence.

When Pope Victor in his arrogance forsook the policy of his predecessors, and nearly precipitated a schism with the Churches of Asia over the date and length of the Easter celebration, Irenaeus interposed with a charming and conciliatory letter arguing that such variety "does but illustrate the oneness of the Faith." This line of Christian discrimination between things of essential and minor importance reappears in the third of the Pfaff Fragments, where the duty of tolerance is urged in regard to all lesser matters of opinion and discipline. Would that these words, for example, had been oftener acted upon in later times: "Whence come controversies? whence schisms? We keep feasts with the leaven of wickedness, rending asunder the Church of God; and we observe the outward to the neglect of the higher—faith and love. . . . Such feasts and fasts are, as we have heard from the prophets, displeasing to the Lord."

With the supposed date of CYPRIAN'S birth we enter the third century, and the ideal picture of earlier days recedes and fades. From the standpoint of religious unity the figure and the work of the famous Bishop of Carthage have chiefly a pathetic interest. For he is the first real systema-

tiser of those mechanical views which concentrate in his best known saying, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—a phrase in itself either true or false according as the two words "church" and "salvation" are defined. Without the power of original thought, Cyprian built to great effect upon other men's foundations. He plagiarises freely from the vigorous Tertullian whom he called *Magister;* and he combined and extended the more extreme statements of Ignatius and Irenaeus on the subject of episcopacy and the Church. While denying and resisting the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, he claims, especially in his conflict with Pope Stephen, an independent authority for each and every individual Bishop which according to Döllinger "would not have left even a shadow of unity remaining."

In short: "as Cyprian crowned the edifice of episcopal power, so also was he the first to put forward without relief or disguise the sacerdotal assumptions; and so uncompromising was the tone in which he asserted them that nothing was left to his successors but to enforce his principles and reiterate his language."[1]

The paramount need of unity however was always supreme in Cyprian's mind. He even attributed the Decian persecution to the sinful disunion already prevalent. And his chief work bore the

[1] Lightfoot: *Philippians*, p. 258.

title *De Catholicæ Ecclesiæ Unitate.* Although he could not look into the future, it is strange that his own bitter episcopal experience at Carthage, and his knowledge of similar experiences at Rome, did not show him the futility of attempting either to reach or to maintain unity by schemes of an artificial kind logically ending in the centralised imperialism of the Papacy ; and in that form, as history has shown, equally impotent for the purpose in view. Conscience and Revelation, Reason and Fact, even singly, and *a fortiori* in combination, are bound to prove stronger than all the scholastic assumption, dogmatism, and dictation in the world. Round that world the Cabots, father and son, will indubitably sail at last, whatever hierarchies say ; and " the great world spins for ever down the ringing grooves of change," though Galileo recant and Giordano Bruno burn.

It is plain that the pure spiritual ideal of Christian Unity set forth by Christ and His Apostles did not long survive the apostolic age. Though the virtue is still recognised to be an aim of vital importance to the Church, the means taken to secure it and to some extent the ideal itself are altered. The Gospel idea, according to which the Spirit of Jesus essentially dwelt in the Community, begins to vanish away. The aim and objective gradually change from the original greatness of a deep and

indivisible spiritual unity into a rigorously defined and mechanical uniformity, centred in and guaranteed by the Bishop alone.

By degrees it grows more important that each branch and twig of the Church should be of the same identical pattern than that the unifying Life-sap of the Vine should freely flow through each and all. The variety and differentiation among the diverse members, essential to the full completion of the witnessing Body, begin to be despised. The original plan of the Church, which for St. Paul was "built upon the foundation of the Apostles *and Prophets*, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone," is half forsaken. And, before the third century is nearly over, the way is clear for the abrogation of the prophetic by the priestly element in the Church. Then this latter has only to be interpreted wholly in the sacerdotal sense, as if the epistle to the Hebrews had never been written, and the transformation is complete. An atmosphere is thus created in which the unifying power of Christ's Religion soon languished into impotence. The original ideal, which based Christian fellowship upon an underlying common life, henceforth becomes a perpetual struggle to maintain a rigid traditional uniformity by means of a mechanical process. Thus began that fatal exaltation of the ἐξουσία at the expense of the δύναμις which has continued to this day, and

which was inevitably destined in due time to force the reappearance of the slighted δύναμις in alienated communities.

On this matter, crucial though it is, we cannot dwell. We have seen enough to justify the heading of this chapter; and all subsequent ecclesiastical history is one long commentary on the dire results of the forsaking. Who can doubt that if Christendom now exemplified the Christianity of Christ, if Christ's Church were the unmistakable pattern and fountain of His life and love, the effect would be the same as it was of old when they who were "of one heart and of one soul" surprised—and converted—a far worse world than that of to-day? But *now* "See how these Christians love one another" is heard no more, except perhaps to edge the satire of some hostile cynic. The treasured talisman of unity, even the Christian expression of goodwill, are kept for very state occasions; and from even this "occasional use" large portions of the Church of Christ habitually dissent.

Where now is that essentially unifying principle—that once victorious force of Love—which emerges at any and every point in the teaching and the life of Jesus, and which permeates the whole impression made by his Master on the writer of the fourth Gospel, and blazes out of whole chapters from the letters of St. Paul? It has been sacrificed to the spirit of dogmatism and domination which ecclesi-

astical Christianity has so repeatedly and deliberately preferred before the religion of experience and of life—the Christianity of the Mind of Christ.

If this fatal mistake had not been made, or if the Church even now found grace to put forth in all its weight of spiritual wealth this single talent she has disastrously buried, its unique power would do more to regenerate the world than all the others with which she has usuriously trafficked during many centuries. Some whole-hearted and generous ecclesiastical endeavour to heal the cleavage between the scholastic ways of thought still clung to by theologians, and the spiritual life as understood by ordinary men, seems to be a necessary prelude to any modern approach to Unity of Faith.

The metaphysical subtleties and speculations which fascinated even the man in the street of fourth-century Alexandria have no appeal for the western mind to-day. Why then press them? Or, again, why rest the proof of Christ's authority on signs and wonders which now are far less easy to believe than the truth they are cited to support? Did not the Master Himself warn us that faith so founded had small value in His eyes, just because it tended to divert the mind from the essential purport of His Teaching? Yet all organised Christendom, whether Catholic or Protestant, more or less cherishes the inclination to enforce belief on *a priori* grounds of external authority, though

the invariable method of Christ was to rely upon Truth's own inherent power to awaken and retain men's faith. It would perhaps not now be possible for an insoluble mystery involving the ontology of the Deity, like the mode of the procession of the Holy Ghost, to split Christendom in twain as actually happened in the past. But recent echoes from Mount Athos, and the gist of those eternally recurrent debates on the Athanasian Creed here at home, give one furiously to think. Moreover a host of kindred riddles in Christology are still kept in such absorbing prominence that it might almost be thought that the Gospel had no infinitely urgent problems to meet of a really practical kind.

CHAPTER II

BROKEN CHRISTENDOM

THE Master-thought of Jesus Christ was the Fatherhood of God. Its necessary corollary was the Brotherhood of men. Consequently one main purpose of the Christianity of Christ was to promote the Unity of Mankind; and no Society formed to embody and perpetuate Christ's Religion in the world could hope to be successful in spreading the leaven of His principles unless it appeared to be a living, corporate example of the unifying power of the Christian Faith. Hence the Master's constant insistence upon Unity as a necessary hall-mark of His Church—"that the world may believe."

But the Society intended to give this constant object-lesson to mankind, in order to confirm the truth of its Founder's mission and message, has now fallen so far from this high vocation as to present instead a conspicuous example of division. Speaking broadly—for our object is practical suggestion and not historical disquisition—this lamentable

fact has come to pass through the gradual growth of a misapprehension as to the essential nature of the unity which our Lord desired and enjoined. This initial error soon led to the employment of wrong means to attain the misconceived ideal; and these injurious methods, in their turn, hardened every difference, widened every breach, and stereotyped the schisms they were intended to cure.

The dominant aim of Christ and His Apostles was not to create a rigid, barren, outward uniformity; but a living Society, intent with singleness of heart upon diligently keeping that Unity of the Spirit which alone can be eternally consistent with the liberty of Christ. The gradual growth of error on this fundamental point of the ideal to be aimed at soon had the effect of restricting the growth of those principles most vital to the progress of Christianity on the true line of its evolution. The things most necessary began to lead a precarious life. Essential truth, which always makes for co-operation and fellowship because it appeals to every man's conscience in the sight of God, was over-laid and over-ridden by an ever-growing series of dogmatic tenets of a scholastic and arbitrary kind, often impossible to connect with the original teaching either in substance or in spirit.

This process of corrupt development has been examined again and again. We are here concerned only with such brief reference and review as may

help us to find a better way. The immense split in the historic structure of Christendom, known as The Great Schism, which divided the Church in the East from that in the West, was the fruit of a gradual separation begun about the middle of the eleventh century and consummated in the thirteenth, when Constantinople was taken and the Greeks were violently subjugated by the Westerns acting under Papal inspiration. The consequent harvest of malice and hatred is not yet fully reaped. In recent Balkan wars, a fiercer animosity was shown between these opposed Christian camps than by either against the Mohammedan oppressors of both.

Politics apart, the cleavage between Greek and Latin Christianity is of a two-fold kind. By far the most radical and serious rift concerns the principles of Church Organisation. The rôle of ceremonial and doctrinal disagreements, either in starting or continuing estrangement, is quite subsidiary. But the real tragedy of the schism lies in the extraordinary fact that neither its primary nor tributary elements involve any question actually affecting the development of character or the improvement of conduct. When we remember the invariable nature of the emphases throughout the Founder's teaching, such a fact seems terribly significant. But it is highly typical of the general character of all ecclesiastical division. Throughout

Christendom, the strongholds of the divisive spirit are almost wholly of a constitutional, traditional, external kind. The religious estrangements which have destroyed the Church's witness to Unity from the beginning until now, derive their meaning and sustenance, and usually their origin, not from those inward and spiritual verities on which Christ insisted as the source and fundament of true religion, but from the doubtful domain of institutional and hierarchical theory or the misty realms of speculative dogma. Hence in our own day it has come to pass that the banning of those that "follow not with us," whatever good they may accomplish in Christ's name, has become a leading industry of rival communions.

In regard to the great Division of East and West, there were, no doubt, divergences of a ritual kind which began very early to *contribute* to this calamity. There were Roman variations from the Eastern form, in the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist and afterwards in the withdrawal of the Chalice, which became the occasion of bloody wars. There was the disuse of immersion in baptism, to which may be added differences of a metaphysical and speculative character, such as the Purgatorial question and the *Filioque* clause; but none of these, any more than the difference of rule as to the celibacy of secular clergy, touches the heart of the schism in its present phase. The truth is

that, up to July 18th, 1870, there existed on doctrinal grounds no sound reason for separation at all. A quarrel on the inscrutable mystery of the Being of God, or about the no less inscrutable future of the spirit of Man, was practically meaningless; since detailed knowledge on either topic is equally beyond the ken of Roman Pontiff and Greek Patriarch, or the wisest counsellors of both. The Vatican decrees, however, had the effect of foisting upon the faithful—by an outrageous abuse of the theory of development—three new articles of belief, namely, the Immaculate Conception (promulgated first in 1854), the universal Episcopacy of the Pope, and his Infallibility *in rebus divinis*. From the standpoint of doctrinal Unity, this was simply to slam the door in the face of the whole Eastern Church, since the meticulous adherence of the Orthodox Communion to purely primitive tradition was perfectly well known.

Some well-informed authorities at the time regarded the Roman action as partly aimed at hardening these mutual relations; but it may be doubted whether anything fresh was in fact needed to accentuate the long existing severance. The extravagant regard for the letter, which is a vogue in the East, was always capable of exaggerating the most doubtful and least material differences into matters of life and death. Indeed a full score of years before the Vatican Council was

held, the Emperor Nicholas—speaking for that immense part of the Orthodox Church of which the reigning Tsar is practically (though not theoretically) the Head—summarised the situation to the Russian and Polish Bishops in these terms: "The true Faith survives in Russia only; in the West it is utterly lost."[1] If therefore that was the Eastern view twenty-one years before 1870, it is certainly not surprising to hear from one of the least unprogressive prelates of this same Communion forty-three years after the Vatican Council that "though it might seem that no Church is closer to the Orthodox than is the Roman Catholic, yet the distance between them is so great as to terrify us; it is almost immeasurable."[2] And then this by no means illiberal specimen among Eastern dignitaries goes on to quote, and apparently endorse, the stiff-necked pose of the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, whose sentence is: "We are Orthodox, and there is nothing for others to do but to become Orthodox also." *Non multa, sed multum!*

On the other hand, it is to be feared that the Roman attitude is no less stubborn and uncompromising. Mr. Wilfrid Ward tried not long ago,[3] though with indifferent success, to combat the well-known judgment of Mr. Gladstone that

[1] The words were spoken on 26th May, 1849.
[2] Abp. Platon, of North America, in *Constructive Quarterly*.
[3] *Constructive Quarterly* for March, 1913.

though "the most important need of our day is to obtain Unity among Christians," yet "the Roman Church appears to be the great obstacle to such union, from her exclusiveness and unconciliatory policy." Now Mr. Wilfrid Ward conducted the *Dublin Review*—one of the best accredited organs of his Church. But nothing would be easier than to justify from comparatively recent issues the contention he attempted to counter. Only a few years ago, for example, when a devout Roman Catholic layman had the temerity to suggest an Eirenicon, that *Review* extinguished the conciliatory attempt in these terms: "The Church's call, whether to individuals or communities, is a summons not to treat, but to surrender. She sits as judge in her own controversy; and the only plea she admits is a *Confiteor*, the only prayer she listens to a *Miserere*." What a spiritual gulf is thus set yawning before an excusably indifferent world, between this "Church's call" and the tones of the Church's Founder—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden"; and again, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

The particular instance above cited of Roman solicitude for the erring may have appeared under the auspices of an editor less disposed to be tolerant than Mr. Ward; still there is little in his own line of argument tending towards any disavowal of an

ecclesiastical attitude which goes far to justify the judgment he sought to controvert.

In such an encounter, Mr. Gladstone must always remain a serious opponent, since his genius for theology was no less remarkable than his political fame. Evidence abundantly confirming his verdict has been afforded by the Roman Curia both before and since he gave it. To draw only from the most familiar among recent instances: there was the notorious pressure brought to bear upon Bishop Ketteler of Mayence, in 1862, on account of the very moderate and reasonable account of Catholic doctrine contained in his work—*Liberty, Authority, and the Church;* then there were the harsh experiences of St. George Mivart at the hands of the Roman authorities at Westminster; the more recent and more notorious treatment accorded to that devoted Catholic, Father Tyrrell; the intolerant opposition raised against the spiritual teaching of Fogazzaro, Duke Litta, and others, in Italy; the suicidal obstinacy of the Vatican handling of the problems of Church and State which arose out of the French Association Law. One and all of these example Rome's "exclusiveness and unconciliatory policy" even in dealing with internal discipline; *a fortiori* must the indictment stand in the case of external relations. It is, in fact, the old fatal Rehoboam rule of Force, seeking to strengthen failing power not by allying policy

more closely with Reason, Truth, and Right, but by more inexorable insistence on the bare *dicta* of Authority. Yet all the time the commonest knowledge increasingly discredits and successfully disputes both the truth of the *dicta* and the assumptions on which their authority is said to rest.

The blocked relations between the great Churches of East and West conspicuously show that the seamless robe of Christ has not been rent by Protestant hands alone. Seeing then that "the most important need of our day is to obtain Unity among Christians," we can but hope that the strong feeling—for obvious reasons faintly vocal—which undoubtedly exists among so many individual members of these rival Communions may ere long develop into a large and mutual unifying movement. Nothing, surely, could appear more fitting than for these ancient folds of the Catholic Church to justify their Catholicity by healing this great schism, which destroyed the Church's witness to unity centuries before such people as Luther and Erasmus, or Latimer and Cranmer, were born.

We have seen that up to 1870, or at least up to 1854, the doctrinal differences were slight, and those affecting ritual and worship not important. This, however, cannot be said of the main matter in dispute. No impartial onlooker can hesitate in finding the real *crux* in opposed conceptions of organisation deeply affecting the Constitution of

the Church. The cleavage to-day is rooted in the old original rift. The Catholicity of East and West was shorn of its visible appeal to the world because the good ship Unity was broken on that rock of Roman Absolutism which has also wrecked every large attempt made since in the direction of restoration and reunion. Here in this ancient quarrel lies the only stubborn ground of separation to-day. Not content with such a primacy for St. Peter's successor as was readily conceded to the prestige of the Metropolitan See, Rome insisted on pressing despotic claims founded on no Christian principle but based on the practice of secular imperialism. In plain words, the Papacy assumed to itself that very "lordship" over God's heritage which had been specifically condemned by Christ, and studiously avoided by His Apostles.

Döllinger has pointed out that even in the twelfth century it was still the prevalent view that there was but one great Universal Church, embracing East and West alike. Both sides appealed to the first seven or eight Œcumenical Councils, and held that fresh decisions binding the Catholic Church could only be enacted at some similar Synod representing East and West. This is still the belief in the East, and in Russia. And with it is connected the Patriarchal theory that there are Five Presidents of the whole Church, four in the East and one in the West, namely, the Pope,

to whom belongs the first rank but no power or dominion over the rest. But since the Pope has separated himself, and put forth inadmissible absolutist claims, his place has been taken by the later Patriarchate of Moscow, and since 1720 by the Governing Synod of Petrograd which superseded it.

The true nature of the "root of bitterness" from which the Great Schism sprang may be judged from the rampant growths which it produced in after times. No doubt history and circumstances in the West made a fatal confusion between the spiritual and temporal peculiarly tempting to the Roman Church. But it was none the less wrong, and none the less disastrous to Unity. Power became an idol in whose honour those domineering methods were set up in the sphere of Church government which have so often proved the ruin of secular States. Every form of ὕβρις has its appropriate nemesis. In the realm of religion, schism is bred by a policy of pride, as elsewhere tyranny breeds revolution.

Now from the point of view of the Greek Church, as from that of any Reformed Communion, the whole fabric of Roman claims to superlative authority is destitute of all foundation. Yet for centuries no other claim has ever to the same extent engrossed the energies and consumed the zeal of the politicians who surround the Chair of

St. Peter. On this matter it seems hardly possible to call more highly qualified expert witness than Johann Ignaz von Döllinger. This erudite and upright man, attached to the faculty of theology in the university of the capital of the Roman Catholic State of Bavaria, in the seventy-second year of a life continually steeped in the study of Church History, was driven from his Communion because "as a Christian, as a theologian, as an historian, and as a citizen," he could not accept the Vatican Decrees of 1870. But the truer judgment of the world of learning appears in the fact that excommunication was immediately followed by his almost unanimous election as *Rector-magnificus* in his own University of Munich, and by a shower of honorary Doctorates from the Universities of Oxford, Edinburgh, Marburg, and even of strictly Roman Catholic Vienna. His refusal to co-operate actively with the Old Catholics, with whom by conviction he was at one, proves the reluctance of the decision which candour and learning had forced him to make. Had one of Döllinger's "immense reputation as a scholar, as a divine, and as a man," consented to be consecrated Bishop in this Jansenist Church (which has existed in Holland for some two hundred years) Bavaria generally would probably have forsaken the Pope. This abstention entirely clears from any suspicion of schismatic spirit the verdict I am about

to quote. Vatican officialdom may stigmatise the writer as "the apostate Döllinger," but the fact remains that his conduct, no less than his pen, was purely directed by zeal for that Unity which he saw the policy of Rome to be bent on banishing further than ever, except on her own impossible terms.

Here, then, is a Catholic indeed in whom is no guile; and this is what he says upon the issue before us:—

"The Greek Church was called upon in the 13th, 15th, and 16th centuries to accept a form of absolute monarchical government for which there was no precedent, and which had only been developed in the West first in the 9th, and then in the 11th and 12th centuries, by means of a long series of forgeries and inventions by which the Western clergy had been deceived, and which it was now sought to impose on the Greeks. The learned Greeks, however, were too well informed, and the only result was increasing mistrust. . . . The real hindrance to any understanding in the eyes of all Easterns is the Papacy in the form it has assumed, according to ultramontane theory, of an absolute spiritual and temporal dominion over the whole Christian world." (Döllinger's *Reunion of the Churches*. Lectures given in 1871.)

Concerned as we are with the past only so far as it affects the present, it is needless to trace the steps by which this theory has been built and buttressed from the days of Gregory VII till the edifice received its finial of Infallibility less than

fifty years ago. A single sample specimen of the methods used may well suffice us. When the fifth Lateran Council met at Rome on March 16th, 1517, after several years' session, one of its principal achievements was the Bull *Pastor Aeternus*, which asserted the superiority of Popes to Councils, in direct opposition to the famous decrees of Constance. Yet this Council was attended only by fifty or sixty Italian Bishops, and was never even claimed as Œcumenical until quite recent times. But the means used mattered little if the object in view could be attained, namely, an extension of the power of the Pope, and the creation of a gag for any awkward voices of independence that might be raised in any future Council foolishly inspired with reforming zeal. *Ex uno disce omnes.*

Now the best hope, next of course to honesty, for a unifying movement in Religion will always lie in an increase of mental culture diverting spiritual zeal into higher channels. From a low intellectual standpoint differences of rite and ceremonial are regarded as matters on which salvation turns; thus peaceful inquiry and discussion are ruled out, and men rush at once to arms. It cannot, we fear, be said that any wide possession of this higher mentality is conspicuous in the case of the Greek Church, which has been less than most Churches in contact with progressive peoples. But, on the other hand, the recent general and strik-

ing revival of the Slav spirit, with its magnificent and fundamental sentiment of human fellowship, may advance the discovery that no such ideal can be even approximately realised without an abatement of religious animosities and of ecclesiastically fostered ill will. Moreover, against the mechanical tendencies of letter-worship and the numbing pressure of tradition upon the Eastern official mind may at all events be set the promise of the fact that this great Church has never jettisoned its capacity to correct past mistakes, even where Conciliar decisions are involved. No system of fictitious infallibility compels her, on principle, "always to drag her errors after her like a ball fastened to her heel, as must be the case with Rome." In the case of any Church not claiming to be *complete* in isolation because it is itself alone that One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of which the Creed speaks, some disposition favourable to Reunion may safely be assumed. Indeed we know that the Councils held in the East by Greek and Russian Bishops carefully abstained from calling themselves Œcumenical because the Greek Church does not regard herself alone as constituting the Church Universal.[1] The Anglican position is of course in this respect the same. Indeed any other view would traverse the doctrinal rule, admitted even by papally-minded theologians,

[1] Mouravieff; quoted by Döllinger.

that it is Baptism which determines membership in the Catholic Church.

Turning to Latin Christendom, matters are very different. Here, although the wish for Unity is cherished in many individual minds which may no doubt be trusted to multiply in number, no evidence exists of the smallest official desire for Reunion upon any terms short of absolute absorption. No strong party of reform or of concession has succeeded in maintaining itself within the Roman Obedience since the time of the Council of Trent and the rise of the Jesuit Order. Theirs was the army which fought and conquered the sixteenth century attempts of Witzel and Cassander, who wished to see the Church restored to the form it took during free development under Constantine, at the period of the first Councils. It was they who, in the judgment of Father Panzani, the Papal Agent,[1] worked harder than the Puritans to prevent that drawing together of Rome and Canterbury so earnestly desired in the seventeenth century by Anglicans of the Laudian school. Elsewhere, they rendered abortive the fine attempts alike of Bossuet, Molanus, and Leibnitz; and doomed every similar venture for 170 years. In short,

[1] Father Leander's "Report of Negotiations" appears in *Clarendon State Papers*, vol. ii., p. 207. Leander and Panzani had been sent to England in 1632 and 1634 to examine and report on the condition of English Roman Catholics, and on the state of the Anglican Church.

the harvest of dragons' teeth sown by the Order of Loyola during its long supremacy at the Vatican may be traced in almost every country in Europe, and in many far beyond. Its members conceived, and in concert with certain Bishops finally shaped, the ill-omened Vatican Decrees—arrows directed at the heart of any fluttering desire for Reunion which might happen to stir the breast of the Orthodox Church.

But the *coup* of 1870, which staggered Newman and so excited Gladstone, injured the prospects of Unity all over the Christian world. It not only drew the Faith of the West a long way further from union with that of the historic Church of the East; it did much to widen the breach between Rome and all the rest of Christendom. For where is the Church prepared to face the risks of uniting with a body which assumes the right, never before heard of in the Christian world, of making new dogmas; and one, moreover, which places this right in the absolute discretion of a single individual? In the case of a Church so despotically constituted, no such thing as *Union* is even possible—nothing but unconditional subjection and the total renunciation of all knowledge and judgment. By what principles of the Church's Founder, of the New Testament, or even of authentic Christian tradition, can such a notion be justified as this blindfold plan of binding oneself to accept any Articles of

Faith that in such a fashion may, even hereafter, be fabricated ?

It is impossible to doubt that the underlying mischief—that which constitutes the insuperable barrier to Unity, and also confirms the hostility of the Papacy to reform of other kinds—is just the one primary, deep-seated principle of papal aggrandisement, rooted in the will-to-power. The power was no doubt largely desired and jealously guarded for good ends ; and by many great Popes has been on occasion beneficially exerted. But the Church of Christ, no less than the world at large, has outgrown the stage in which any despotic hegemony can achieve universal recognition. The ultramontane development of the Papal system with its vast organisation and rigorously centralised Curial bureaucracy is a magnificent, an awe-inspiring, machine ; but the free Spiritual forces of the Kingdom of God, the Divine forces of life informed by love, are a mightier means for the conversion of the world. The majority of Christians will always instinctively suspect the machine, and fly the imposing array of its grinding wheels. So long as Rome has nothing to propose to any other part of the Church of Christ save abject submission to indefensible claims, the Reunion of Christendom will remain as unattainable as the political peace of Europe on the terms of the bureaucrats of Prussia. No wonder of organisation,

no pre-eminence in numbers or in might, can confer upon either Church or State a plenary right to universal domination.

Moreover, the very arrogation of such a rôle is sure to have an incalculably bad effect. When Power is made into an Idol, the idol soon becomes an omnivorous, insatiable Moloch. The prevailing obsession infects the whole attitude and outlook. Is it a question of the possible improvement of doctrine or practice? All comes finally to be determined not on the real merits of the case but according to its effect on the prestige, the infallibility, of the Power. Take for instance a question like the rule of Communion in one kind only. Such a point might seem to be one purely of expediency, of doctrine, or of tradition; but to those possessed with the spirit of aggrandisement which is the heart and soul of the Roman system, it appears mainly a question of Papal authority. To concede it, even in order to further the sacred cause of Unity, would asperse the conduct of previous Popes, who sacrificed innumerable lives to maintain this particular "use." There is no other key, again, to the amazing obscurantism which shows itself invariably hostile to any change which the progress of knowledge and the general adoption of scientific method in ascertaining historical truth irresistibly urge. Nor can we otherwise account for the banal clinging to Temporal

Dominion for the Vicar of that Christ Who took pains to declare, "My Kingdom is not of this world." The single explanation of such mysteries is the necessity to sacrifice all to the Idol—the worship of the fatal principle "that a claim once preferred should never be abandoned, an error or an injustice never publicly confessed, and therefore never remedied"; because, at all costs, Authority must remain inviolate, and can never be sufficiently exalted.

Thus the supreme aim has ever been to increase cohesion in the vast and baseless fabric of ecclesiastical imperialism, if by any means the undermined super-structure can be kept together. To this end, decade after decade, the Organisation is elaborated and grows more stringently centralised. But the one thing that could give it permanence is wholly wanting, namely, a foundation of Truth. For this absolute essential no mere Power can go on for ever extemporising substitutes. False or non-existent premisses cannot finally sustain the work of the architects of Roman supremacy, whatever logical ingenuity may be spent on clamping or cementing the imposing mass that meets the eye. The revenge of Truth is slow but sure. Day by day in every sphere she more and more insists on the scrutiny of origins. Hence the great Founder's warning about houses built on sand instead of upon rock must ere long inevitably

apply to the artificial edifice of Roman Absolutism. Ominous signs will meet us in the further course of our study. It will grow evident that even the cumulative effort of ages cannot avert the cracking here and crumbling there which presage final fall.

For the sake of the future of Religion, perhaps nothing is more devoutly to be wished than the disappearance of this greatest of all the hindrances to Unity. If this immense obstacle, now holding up the healthy development of organised Christianity and delaying the next great stride in the evolution of Christendom, were to be deliberately dissolved *from within*; a step so magnanimous and candid would signalise the release of spiritual forces competent to transform the whole Catholic Church. The gain, even to the Vatican itself, in deserved and genuine prestige, would enormously out-weigh the feared but fictitious loss. Unfortunately, the greatest institutions seldom recognise their day of visitation. And if a spiritual victory of such immeasurable benefit to the mutual relations of Greek and Latin Christianity and indirectly to the whole Church of Christ is counted a thing impossible, the issue can only be sorrowfully left in the omnipotent hands of Time and Truth. In the way of peace nothing is ever possible except to men of good will. Without some genuine longing to bind up the gaping wounds in the Body of Christ with the balm of His infinite Love, there

is no hope. For hope, like faith, is always bound up with the governing grace of Charity. And not until the Apostolic view of the true order of precedence among the three theological virtues informs and inspires the judgment and the acts of Apostolic Churches, can we look for the emergence of that grace of Unity on which, according to Christ, the conversion of the world depends. Meanwhile, all Christians lament the disasters which follow from an ideal forsaken and a power untried. As Bishop Maret wrote, more than a generation ago, "If idolatry prevails over the greater part of the globe, if Mohammedanism desolates once flourishing Christian countries, if a thinly disguised Atheism ravages even the Christian world—doubt not that one of the most powerful causes of so many shameful humiliations lies in the unhappy divisions of Christendom. Everything which can hinder the drawing together again of hearts and minds, and the restoration of religious unity, should be regarded as the greatest of evils, because it is that which hinders the greatest of blessings."

The chasm still yawning between the Papal and the Patriarchal theories of Church Government, no less than the prolific facilities for fresh division created by the historically inevitable Reformation, may well daunt the spirit of any crusader for Reunion. But if his ear be open to the *Deus vult* which never rallied Religion to a nobler cause, he

will go on saturating his mind with the *idea* of Unity, and not relax his efforts on account of the difficulties to be overcome. Patience is as requisite as courage. The malignant growths of ages may take generations to uproot, though the teaching of current events should certainly break up the ground round some of the worst. We have seen what follows when the State most powerfully organised for temporal dominion dooms itself to prove that no means however formidable or unscrupulous can subject the modern world to a despotism that is indefensible. But if, in the political sphere, to harbour these dreams of an antique ambition (which the Time-spirit has dissipated for ever) can only perpetuate the horrors of War; it is certain that their ecclesiastical counterpart can only stereotype Schism; and so leave Christendom at the mercy of foes without, because it is torn within by the most divisive of all evil powers—the vice of self-aggrandisement.

Latin and Greek, Anglican and Protestant, all are evidently guilty in this thing—though not in the same degree. All, to some extent, have sought the advancement of the part, without due care for the well-being of the whole. Every organisation has merited the scorn of the world by appearing competitive instead of co-operative. The ugly and amazing spectacle of Churches and sects mutually hating and opposing each other

would horrify us but for the familiarity which has stupefied our minds and paralysed our wills. In other departments of life (in Science and Art for example) the power of attraction and union in the mind asserts itself, and discord is soon lost in harmonious thought and work. As knowledge advances, unity results. On the higher planes of intelligence it is otherwise only with Religion. Though the Faith of Christ in its most vital essence is the manifestation of Love—redeeming and Divine—yet this revelation, designed to be the most powerful bond of union in the world, has been continually perverted so as to produce division. Hence "what was to establish peace has kindled strife and bloody wars; what was to give men certainty and confidence has provoked doubt, and planted mistrust in their minds."

The outstanding lesson of this undeniable world-wide failure of ecclesiastical Christianity is plain to read. False conceptions of worth and dignity have eaten like a canker into its ideals and weakened its spiritual power over men. How little for instance is there to show that the Church, any more than the world, believes in her Founder's word that "the *Meek* shall inherit the earth." Yet if the faith of Christ embodied in that social prophecy is not shared by the Church to whom He committed its fulfilment—"Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world"—then

the savourless salt cannot avert corruption, nor the screened light conquer the surrounding darkness; for the very aims and methods of the Church itself become infected with the gladiatorial theory which has been allowed to govern the world in every relation of life.

Every failure of Christendom is rooted in its inability to live on the spiritual plane of its Founder. When He says "Have faith in God," or His Apostle declares "the weakness of God is stronger than men," the too general response of institutional religion is some fresh development of man-made organisation, some additional piece of machinery, some new call to the world for deeper trust in anything and everything that *we* can do. This essentially irreligious attitude gives to Church projects and policy an appearance of perilous contempt for the most vital principle of abiding work—"Not by might nor by power, but by My SPIRIT, saith the Lord." When that divine formula for temple-builders is despised by the rulers of any visible Church, they must be prepared for consequences that are inevitable. The Temple not made with hands "where spirit with Spirit doth meet," which Churches were commissioned to provide for the shelter and inspiration of humanity, will go on growing; but they will presently wake up to find that the organised shell of religion, on which too much of their labour is spent, has been

in fact superseded by the influential power of the "diffused Christianity" on which they have only looked askance. If things continue as they are, long before Moriah and Gerizim have settled their disputes the true worshippers whom the Father seeketh will have finally found their spiritual home "neither on this mountain nor on that." To the scribal mind, these people that know not the law are always anathema. But they have a sure instinct for the spirit and truth of words of life; and any hierarchical system that can only curse them is moribund. Its Babel towers may aspire to heaven, but the conflicting language of earthly thoughts and worldly ways dooms it to confusion. Yet the Holy City at unity with itself "cometh down from God out of heaven" in our despite who go on labouring to raise ineffectual walls of salvation from the ground, making void the word of God lest we fail to magnify the traditions of men. When shall we learn that every repentance unto truth, every sacrifice of ecclesiastical prejudice, every surrender of the doubtful to the essential, every reconsideration of what constitutes an essential in the light of advancing knowledge and of love's supreme demand, is a victory of the Spirit—a strengthening and not a weakening of that Church of the Living God which only exists to promote the coming of His Kingdom and the doing of His Will?

That perpetual advent is one of the necessities of the social evolution of mankind. Every set-back, like the present war, only makes men thirst the more for the "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" which are the notes of God's Kingdom and the signs of His Will being done. Humanity will never consent to be balked of the blessings of the Kingdom because the Church is too preoccupied with the correct credentials of a herald to do the heralding demanded. If this goes on, if Christendom remains deaf to the old strong word: "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdom," the very stones will presently cry out. As the old commission passed from those children of Abraham who were too engrossed with questions of genealogy to minister to human need, so in its turn must another unspiritual Israel be disinherited of misused privilege on similar grounds. The wine is the thing, not the wine-skins. The good news is more than the accent of its messenger. The unaccredited heralds and irregular ministries which vex the soul of organised Christianity will never cease until the Spirit-bearing body is clearly seen to be ruled by the Spirit and not crippled by an excessive reliance upon externals.

Unless every sign of the times prove false, the world is approaching a stage in the way of God for men which is remarkable for nothing so much

as an extraordinarily general recognition that the basis of all reality is spiritual. And if the philosophy of the future is, as seems certain, a philosophy of the spirit; the faith of the future will even more certainly be found in a religion of the spirit. We see psychology superseding not only scholasticism but also biology in the interest of men who think. The sense of materialistic oppression induced by a wonderful period of scientific progress is clearly yielding to higher and truer thoughts. Evolution is hailed not only as "creative," but very widely as "purposive." Our chief doubt now is whether matter itself is not a spiritual thing. Drama, poetry, fiction, all dig deep into the mind of man and treat of "the innate life-force, the urge of the spirit, which impels us even when we are least conscious of it." Our Laureate leaves his own verse to gather the wisdom of the wise from every age and every land concerning *The Spirit of Man*. More than one philosopher among our statesmen—one especially in a recent striking and ingenious course of University lectures—has enforced for us the truth men everywhere feel in a new way to be in the air—the truth that there is something in the spirit of ordinary man "that goes beyond all that science and philosophy can conceive, and that calls imperatively for God."

All this points one way. And it is the way of the world's most urgent need. We know what is

most wrong. It is not want of intellect, nor want of power. It is *the spirit to use capacity aright;* to know with Old Testament certainty that only "in the way of Righteousness is Life," and to share the saving conviction of St. Paul that "the mind of the Spirit is life and peace." And as nothing can bring peace to the world but a fresh spirit in the hearts of men, so can nothing else but this bring unity to the Church.

Some of us perhaps think we see the way—the way of Christ—by which, in gradual stages of unhurried growth, unity of spirit might be won and unity of faith prepared for. At all events we see how a beginning might be made by all alike—Orthodox and Roman, Catholic and Protestant—resolutely setting higher value on the doctrines now held in common than upon those that separate. We visualise a process of mutual learning and receiving of each other—a ready sharing of each peculiar heritage of thought and life which now serves only as ground for division. The way of unity is always the way of Comprehension, *not* of Exclusion. We would see twentieth-century Christendom transform and transfigure the passing and profitless primitive enthusiasm for community of worldly possessions into a far more beneficial sharing of spiritual goods. Nothing would tend more directly to realise the happy forecast of the day which will see the Petrine and Pauline Churches

developing into a Johannean Church; or, in mediæval phrase, when to the period of the Father and the Son shall succeed the age of the Holy Ghost.

No one can look out over Christendom in these years of Grace—1914 to 1916—and feel able to acquit any part of this immense organisation of lamentable failure. The most influential cause of failure is lack of unity. Now we may trace with some certainty the cause of disunion to its various historical sources, and with even more certainty we may disengage the problems that now keep Christians divided. We may perhaps busy ourselves with some crucible for their solution; but after all there is only one kind of heat that can dissolve them, and that is from the fire of *the Spirit of God*. John's baptism of water may lead us to Repentance; but for Hope we must rely on Him Who baptizes "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." It is this fact which supplies the true measure of the indispensableness of any Christian Church. It will vary in the degree of the pureness and clarity of its witness to Christ and Christ's teaching. The Church that seeks authority for itself can never win the world; but no Church which clearly and truly testifies to Christ will ever lack authority. The Church is not above her Lord. The words which state His own claim to be believed must

a fortiori describe the genuine authority of the Church: "He that speaketh from himself," said Christ, "seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of Him that sent him, the same is true."[1] Not till the Church assimilates that lesson will she ever convince the world that her teaching is of God.

History shows that as time passes all religions tend to fall away from their Founder's first principles, and to become gradually enmeshed in a hampering net-work of accretions both ceremonial and dogmatic. The religion of Christ cannot claim to be an exception to this rule. And those Churches which have least made Christ of none effect, which have been most loyal in refusing to make a fetish of the outward sign for fear of losing the inward grace;—the Churches that have best preserved the life of the Spirit from being choked by alien over-growths; which have honestly tried to bond in their presentation of truth with the responsive moral sense in man, and have not despised appeal to those ruling sanctions of experience and intuition upon which a religion of the Spirit is designed to act;—even these have only partially succeeded; and that only by virtue of much vigilance against the inevitable institutional tendency to externalise and contract the Faith.

[1] Jno. vii., 18.

That is why every reformation of religion has necessarily begun with a breaking of nets and discarding of husks, so that the original spiritual power, which alone could ever have founded the Faith, may once more be recovered for its preservation and more abundant life.

CHAPTER III

THE PATH OF RECOVERY

So long as the Disunion of Christendom is regarded as inevitable, its "offence" must go on delaying the conversion of the world. Until the Christian conscience ceases to accept this evil as past healing, the greatest scandal in the Church can no more pass than war—the greatest scandal in the World. Nevertheless in both cases the time is more than ripe for the fatal doctrine of "inevitability" to be utterly cast off, and for a great resurgence of the Faith of Christ that God's will *can* be done upon earth, and that God relies on the moral sense and the free-will of man to do it. Probably nothing would more tend to forward international unity than the impulse and example of the Churches of Christ making a great and simultaneous move in the same direction.

What then ought we to regard as the Way-marks

most certain to distinguish a possible Path of Recovery? Probably these three :—

I. Willingness on the part of all organised Christendom to acknowledge error.

II. A new understanding of and regard for the most Fundamental Verities.

III. A much more absolute allegiance to the Supremacy of Christ.

I. The necessity for the first—*will to acknowledge error*—will increasingly appear as we pursue our way through the forest of ecclesiastical division ; it is however *prima facie* impossible for Christendom to have failed so signally in a grace held cardinal by Christ except through some serious decline and fall from His teaching and intention. Hence, for all the Churches, the entrance of every way leading to Unity is guarded by the narrow wicket of Humility and Penitence. The words of the profound and pious Roman theologian, Johann Adam Möhler, spoken some three generations ago, are no less relevant to-day : "We all have erred, we all have sinned ; and it is the open confession of a common guilt which will be followed by the Festival of Reconciliation." Professor Sanday is no doubt right in telling us that "when an atmosphere favourable to Reunion has been created, then Reunion will come, and not before." But a primary element in that atmosphere must always be—enough honesty and humbleness of mind to conquer the

reluctance in every part of Christendom to confess mistakes.

There is great hope in the rapid advance in knowledge since the days of Möhler. New material for juster discrimination has come to light, which necessarily makes for Unity because it makes for Truth. "Orthodoxy is my doxy" is a far less popular creed than it was. But this view—although ridiculed as the foible of individual caprice—still fortifies the official mind even of the greater Christian Societies, and numbs the arm of Authority which so many in every Church desire to see stretched out in friendliness. If a real change in this single respect came to pass in the Officialdom of all Communions—Greek, Roman and Reformed—the prospects of Reunion would forthwith improve.

A hopeful sign of the times has been the appearance, and persistence now for over three years, of an ably conducted Review called *The Constructive Quarterly*, mainly devoted to this cause. The American Editor is credited with the acquaintance and respect of a larger number of ecclesiastical dignitaries of every Church than any other living man. The pages of his Review bear out this belief. From the standing of all the contributors and the eminence of some the extraordinarily varied aspects of the problem appear as they are viewed from inside by more or less representative men of almost every Christian Society. The

strongest impression produced by a study of the considerable symposium of the first twelve quarterly issues is—(1) the ardent interest taken in every Communion, at least by many individuals, in the possibilities of greater unity; (2) the evident need for an immense deal of spade-work in simplifying the issues involved, before anything really "Constructive" becomes possible; and (3) the clear survival and effectiveness of the great Christian Ideal, underlying the whole many-coloured picture of division.

This last impression, indeed, is so clear that one is led seriously to ask whether the distinctive exaltation of that Ideal may not constitute the actually vital thing which the vicissitudes of Christendom have been divinely intended to promote. At all events we seem irresistibly drawn to attend to any possible lesson that may underlie this survival of that which is so pre-eminently fit to live. What if its enthronement be in fact the intended end and aim of the Unity urged so often by our Lord? When one begins to follow out this hint, there meets us food for thought in the apparent correspondence between the organic schism which bitterness and bigotry account unpardonable sin, and that process of perpetual "scission" which appears to be a normal condition of progress within the great Unity of Nature. The natural world is far enough, we know, from offering

a counterpart to the world of grace. Nevertheless, it may not be merely fanciful to see, in the remarkable care for variety in all the evolution of this world of God, an eloquent warning against the craving for a uniformity which has neither part nor lot with unity. Perhaps one of the commonest sins against Unity according to Christ is this substitution of a false idea of outward conformity for the true idea which consists in submission to one influence—guidance by One Spirit. It is not the uniformity of grains of sand or of a flock of sheep at which we have to aim ; but the unity of a single purpose, work, and will—manifest in free cooperation and fellowship—the same that exists among the diverse members of a human body or among the living branches of a vine.

Now it seems an immensely significant fact that the one single form of sound words which the whole of Christendom in all its parts has never failed to use in common since Christ taught it, is that series of sentences which is the clearest embodiment we can imagine of the Christian Ideal. In the Lord's Prayer we find, as in some Ark of witness, the very principles most fundamental to the unity that has, in fact, been lost by their neglect. For here is the Fatherhood of God, which is the one unbreakable basis of the Brotherhood of men ; here is the charter of God's Kingdom, always coming now and here on the earth, yet com-

ing nowhere save as man learns to hallow God's Name and do His Will; here too is the Law of Love made so absolute in its supremacy as to be ordained the guardian and disposer of Forgiveness —the most powerful tonic and restorer in the medicine of the soul, which not only wakens our saving sense of the Love of God, but throws wide the gates of that Divine Communion by which the human spirit lives.

The more deeply we realise the unfathomable implications of the Lord's Prayer, the less can we doubt a future which opens with at least one pregnant unanimity surviving the changes and chances of two thousand years. Let no man lightly account this single thread; for its strands were indisputably chosen and woven by the Master. In the persistent triumph of its universal use He sees, we may be sure, a fruit of the travail of His soul; though the rareness of the instance is a sad reminder of our shame. No doubt great symbols of unity survive, under various forms, in both the Sacraments of Christ's own institution; and the bare fact of this survival may strengthen hope, however fertile in discord have been the perversions of their simplicity and power. But were we driven back upon the *Paternoster* only, we should still remember Watts' picture proclaiming the great lesson that it is the one string left unbroken on the lyre of humanity which makes all the difference

in life; and this may still inspire us to write "Hope" beneath a scene which otherwise could only preach Despair. These inimitable words which all Christ's flock still pray in common seem like that single string which justifies the artist-prophet of his chosen title.

This really universal use of a symbol so eloquent of the catholicity of Christ is a veritable *sursum corda*, for it promises unanimity *the nearer men draw to the watershed of their Faith*. All Christendom now recites this Prayer; when it is as universally *prayed*, in the spirit of its Author, it will begin to be practised. And when each Christian Society in the name of the whole body finds grace to say, "Forgive *us* our sins, as we also forgive," the day will dawn for all Christendom to reunite. But we have to face things as they are; and history leaves no doubt that ecclesiastical religion has frequently *provoked* division, and that these provocations were often more sinful than the breaches of unity they caused. Guilt can only be cleansed by confession and penitence; and the one test of the truth of either is reform. For Churches no less than for individuals the Repentance that counts is that "whereby we forsake sin."

II. Now since no failure of organised Christianity is more conspicuous than its frequent flouting of the proportions of truth, the path of amendment and recovery will certainly be marked

by a *Return to Fundamental Verities*—the result of a new conviction of their cardinal importance.

(1) It is remarkable how unanimous all parts of the now divided Church are in agreeing that Unity *ought* to be a recognisable mark of that Church. No one doubts that this at any rate was one of the Founder's governing ideas. Although this unity has been lost, yet the true *idea* of the Church as a perpetual and universal witness to Christ and His teaching has not been lost. And just as the fact that the early Church was essentially a Missionary Church acted as a constant stimulus to keep the witnessing body "perfected into one" even as the Son with the Father—"that the world may know that Thou didst send Me,"—so to-day it is the exigencies of the Mission-field which are forcing "the Church of the living God" to realise anew that it cannot act as "the pillar and stay of the Truth" unless it is agreed at least upon what things matter most, and is prepared to proclaim these necessary things with no uncertain voice.

But we are a long way from the state of the Church of the First Days when for every ruler however great, for every instructed scribe however learned, for every simple member however obscure, the personality and the principles of Christ were felt to furnish the standard of necessary doctrine, and the test by which to judge the kind of truth which meant life and peace for Church and World

alike. Long ages of disunion have now so stereotyped our divisions that, when the separated bodies attempt to apply even the few principles accepted by all, our cherished disagreements rise up to confound us. Each Communion professes only to require *unitas in necessariis* as the condition of reconciliation, yet the precise content of these necessary things continues to furnish the bone and marrow of our strife.

How then did this fountain of division come to be stanched in days when the unity necessary for effective witness was still preserved? Let no man say that primitive conditions have now so changed that primitive methods are obsolete. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," and His *Spirit* is eternally *One*, into which all are baptized. Therefore, however true it certainly is that new times demand new means, and new knowledge requires re-statement, yet the fundamental Christian principles, which determine both, remain changeless and abiding. And it is because modern and mediæval failures in the grace of Unity are demonstrably due very largely to the disregard of fundamentals valid for all time that a loyal return to the true Dominican Rule, however new the form of fidelity required, must become a primary ingredient in any real specific for the divisions we deplore.

History shows that anything really deserving

to be called a Rule of the Lord for discriminating essentials was only too early discarded by the Church. Nor can anyone candidly recognise the principles put first by our Lord, and remain in doubt that the unifying power of the Christianity of Christ was chiefly lost by their suspension or neglect. To argue that the few doctrinal utterances of Jesus could not afford, and were not intended to afford, a theological outfit for a future Church, is reasonable enough. But it is no argument at all for the incorporation into the formularies, discipline, or polity of a Church which was to be eternally guided by the Spirit of its Founder, of anything manifestly contrary to plain instructions that He actually gave, or contrary to the Spirit of His Teaching regarded as a whole. And nothing could be more inevitable than that such courses would directly lead to schism in the Christian Body.

No one can study the Sermon on the Mount, the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, or the final discourse at the Last Supper recorded in the fourth Gospel, and remain in any doubt as to what, in the mind of Christ, were the matters fundamental for the world's salvation. But since there are those who regard Pauline Christianity as if it formed a kind of new foundation for the Faith, we may add to the above: Romans xii, Corinthians xi and xiii, Ephesians iv, and from

Philippians and Colossians the third chapters in each letter.

In the whole of this diverse presentment, the One Faith, the One Spirit, the One Hope, of the Christian calling appear beyond dispute. The power which such Unity exerted over the first rulers of the Church is to be seen in all the resolutions of the earliest Councils. What followed upon its subordination or abandonment is plain to read in the record of later Conciliar proceedings. They constantly present the most violent contrast in their tone and spirit to that first great example of joint Apostolic method, which sent out from the Mother City of the Faith the essentially Christian encyclical so carefully reducing to its lowest terms the burden of "necessary things" which were to be made the conditions of unity.

Or again, think of the noble and untiring efforts of St. Paul to exorcise the spirit of disunion from the Church at Corinth where every circumstance tended to foster it. Lest it be thought that, in the perennial struggle for the maintenance of unity, those early days of the Church's history presented no difficulties at all comparable with our own, we may recall the positively anarchic tendencies to be encountered. "History could produce nothing like that state of things. Slaves had suddenly found themselves on a spiritual level with their owners; emancipated women had

begun to prophesy in the common assembly, to the scandal of old-fashioned disciplinarians; there was a Babel of tongues, as each individual claimed priority for the exercise of his spiritual gift." How could such a conglomerate hold together? Only by some vital principle of Unity stronger than all human claims of ambition or caprice; only, thought St. Paul, by the recognition of an organic *spiritual life* able to relate in decency and order part with part, even as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office. So he pleaded, exhorted, commanded, with a fire that still flames in his burning words, against the monstrous impossibility of a "divided Christ." This Body into which all were baptized whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, was it not Christ's Body, the instrument through which He, "the Lord—the Spirit" (ever-living, ever-working), is to uplift and change the face of the world? If there be no unity, no individual deference and self-restraint, no realisation that all kinds of members are needed to complete the Body, and that no member is anything apart from the whole—then the true orbit of good works will be forsaken and the labour ordained will not be done.

Paul knew that if the united witness failed, the "salt of the earth" would grow savourless; and then wherewith should it be salted? No bushel-

measure of man could be allowed to cover up the light of God. The Christly combination of "love and a sound mind," the very ἐπιείκεια of the Lord Himself, must be unceasingly arrayed against the forces of human passion or intrigue, against the policy of pettiness or partisanship and all attempts to revive in the Christian Church the alien Jewish spirit of exclusion. Only thus could "the City set on a hill," intended to charm and attract the world by its unity with itself, be saved from the degradation of appearing before men as a mere uninviting chaos of loose and broken stones. And this Apostolic view was right. Through its strong prevalence at the first, the Church of Christ carried with it the sort of testimony to its Message and Mission which men can understand and respect. Here was a new, strange thing in the world—a Community of believers of all sorts and conditions standing together as one, for a great corporate ideal inspiring the whole body with eagerness to labour and patience to endure.

But the success of the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic Church as a pillar of witness in the world rested, we must remember, not only upon the conviction that Unity was of primary value, but also upon the use of purely Christian methods to maintain it. When means not according to Christ began to be used to sustain the united witness, the witness began to fail; and it broke down

more and more as the Founder's principles fell further into the background. Important questions, both of doctrine and administration, were no doubt bound to arise; and many of them had to be settled in the Church's way if Christianity was to survive; but again and again the trivial was treated as of greater moment than the fundamental, and thus the Christianity of Christ was shorn of its compelling beauty and robbed of much of its appealing power. As time went on, the Church became engrossed with hierarchical, sacerdotal, and later with temporal claims, having slight connection with pure religion or with the deeper needs of human life.

(2) Not only was the proportion of Truth disregarded, but *prominent features of the original teaching and method were directly contravened.* For example, as the Church became tempted to maintain unity by force, so she was led away from her proper spiritual domain and began to usurp over opinion, in secular fields quite foreign to her own, an authority which advancing knowledge was bound to challenge and in due time destroy. Instead of perpetuating the conspicuous and arresting wonder that no word of her Lord has ever grown out of date, or been sunk under the rising tide of human progress, the Church dealt out torture and death for the assertion of truths which are now commonplaces of elementary education.

It is surprising how long this suicidal method of compulsion held sway over the ecclesiastical mind. Even in the seventeenth century, the enlightened and influential Bossuet, the theological oracle of his time, although in his *Exposition of the Catholic Faith* he was reasonable enough to distinguish genuine dogma from theological inferences and speculative opinions, yet could not see that a Church bent upon coercing conscience is not furthering unity but propagating schism. But it was the way of the time; and long after 1704, when Bossuet died, his Church was dealing out death or the galleys to French Protestants; while Catholics in Ireland and England were being persecuted, and Nonconformity of another type was penalised, through the influence of another Church which, accounting itself both "Catholic *and* Reformed," should have found in tolerance a natural exercise.

Unity can no more be secured in religion than in politics by menaces or violence, since every use of such means only widens the breach it is intended to close. Quite recently there was a heresy embroilment at a Greek Church stronghold on Mount Athos. The arguments turned upon a minute point of verbal hair-splitting of a positively puerile kind. Some hundreds of monks were excommunicated. Was the Orthodox body strengthened? Was the influence of Religion advanced? In like

manner it may be questioned if in any way the Papacy has grown in power, or the Roman Church in purity, by cutting off such eminently Christian souls as Father Tyrrell and the Abbé Lemire. Pre-war Anglicanism was convulsed by the amenities of Kikuyu; but in this case official Authority refused to countenance a deplorable outburst which at one time appeared to hazard the possibility of a conquest of faith by superstition. After Armageddon we may surely hope for a truer sense of proportion to prevail; so that Bishops may exhibit even a little over-eagerness to foreclose sluices of strife in prospective Christian Churches without becoming the victims of ecclesiastical spleen.

When will the Church of Christ understand that to tighten obscurantist curbs, apply the rowels of intolerance, or harry by such ingenuities of subterranean espionage as the Montagnini revelations disclosed, is simply to adopt a policy that defeats itself, besides being totally opposed to the Founder's spirit and example? When will that "happy revolution" take place which was commended by a wise eighteenth century Pope, who had the wit and grace to realise the extreme impolicy of harshness as an aid to religion?—"If, instead of being persecuted, heretics had simply been entreated and adjured with all possible gentleness not to separate from the centre of Unity; if their difficulties had been explained with kindness, their

objections patiently listened to; and if above all they had been addressed as Religion itself speaks, without bitterness or pride"—this would have been no sign of weakness but a deep source of strength to the Church. So thought Clement XIV; and who can doubt that he was right?

Nowhere in the whole New Testament is to be found the least trace of a demand for anything approaching intellectual suicide; nowhere any countenance of a blind, or cynical, transference of mental or spiritual obligation to any earthly repository of omniscience. All such tampering with moral consciousness involves a renunciation of the powers of heart and mind which invites paralysis of will. Then conduct and character suffer together. Faith's anchor drags from its holding in the sand. Love finds no fulcrum. Hope's vision fades. Even the interests of dogma are not truly served; for unless mind and will are active and alert no doctrine worth knowing can be known or obeyed. Exacted conformity is worthless. To attempt to produce conviction by coercing the intelligence and breaking down the will is simply to substitute the mortifying System of the Jesuit for the life-giving Spirit of Jesus.

(3) Once more, a return to fundamental verities must involve the adoption by the Church of her Lord's way of *putting life first in every judgment.* St. Paul's "craftsman who needeth not to be ashamed," because of his gift of "rightly handling

the Word of Truth," is a model for that Church Authority which alone can be authoritative to-day. No Church can escape the consequences of exalting meticulous tithings of mint, annis, and cummin over the weightier matters of judgment, righteousness, and truth. The modern world will never be got to believe that to cry " Lord, Lord," on the correct note is of the same importance as doing the Father's will. We must win back the truth which underlies the fact that even our most treasured Creeds were originally provided, not as weapons of excommunication, but as symbols of Unity. Until the Church ceases to put dogma before morals, she will never be " heard gladly " like her Lord. What keeps men still in touch with organised Christianity is mainly their true instinct —persistent in spite of continual disappointment— that the primary work of Churches is to nourish religious life, and not merely to perpetuate a certain brand of theological opinion. Only as the Church of Christ more and more justifies that view by the balance and proportion of her Teaching, will it ever approach the peculiar power of Jesus to make doctrine effective in human hearts and lives.

Another consequence of a wholesome change in this direction would be a wonderful and immediate approximation of all separated Christian bodies to one another. For nothing would more help

the general discovery that Religious Fellowship ought not to be determined by identity of Church polity, or by uniformity of intellectual opinion, but can only finally be based on the one really crucial unity which dwells deep down in the underlying life of the spirit. Were this single adjustment of thought to become generally accepted it must have two effects. It would greatly tend to lift existing Churches out of the present vitiated atmosphere of hostility to one another—a spectacle which creates a constant prejudice against the very Religion the Churches exist to promote. Secondly, it would conform ecclesiastical judgment and practice with the fact, daily demonstrated by experience, that men may hold identical opinions without becoming any the more united in the most important field of all, namely, that of character, conduct, and habits of life.

It was no doubt because uniformity of opinion, even had it been attainable, would always be valueless as a religious test, that our Lord equipped His Church with a very different kind of test, namely—" Ye shall know them by their fruits." Nor can any doubt exist as to the sort of fruits He meant, since it was enough to make Him say—" To-day is salvation come to this house," directly its owner changed his swindling ways for the path of rectitude which proved his penitence. The living branches really abiding in the Vine were

to be known by fruit-bearing of a moral and spiritual kind; the withered, though they might outwardly still cling to the same source of life as the rest, because fruitless, were accounted dead.

We sing truly enough—"The Church's One foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord," but the world has grown desperately sceptical of any vital connection between the great superstructures that fill the eye, and its own haunting memory of the Life and Words on which the edifice is said to rest. Max Müller's profound studies in comparative religion have done more for the Faith than many a library of Apologetics; but the Church sets small store by his grave warning: "if Christianity is to retain its hold on Europe and America, if it is to conquer in the holy war of the future, it must throw off its heavy armour—the helmet of brass and the coat of mail—and face the world like David, with his staff, his stones and his sling." The crying need is for the whole organization and propaganda of Christianity to become more simply and manifestly *Christian*, in motive, aim, and method. There is only one possible rallying point for a united and efficacious Christendom, and that is CHRIST Himself. Until His Teaching is really made the test of necessary doctrine, and the spirit of His Life the final arbiter of what is doubtful, the scandal of division cannot end.

If, on the other hand, the whole Church of Christ

made a manifest move in this direction—if ecclesiastical authority were for instance frankly to accept, in all the fulness of its implications, that great verdict of insight and scholarship given by Bishop Lightfoot: "Christianity is not a dogmatic System, nor an ethical Code, but a personal Life;" this rectification of official emphases in favour of "life" as against opinion, and the consequent changes in attitude and action, would at once release such unifying power as would transform Christendom and rejoice mankind. As things are, it is only by virtue of the slight degree in which this great principle already obtains that those spirits of discord, division and disdain, which exactly reverse the Christian Ideal, are sometimes checked and defeated. If this view were to win complete and generous instead of grudging and partial ascendancy, no other single alteration in the aims of Authority, no other readjustment of ecclesiastical balances, would go further toward removing the stigma of unreality which must attach to the great word Catholic until "Church Universal" justifies its exact etymological meaning, namely,—"Church turned into One."

(4) A return to Fundamental Verities seems indeed to require *some revision of the meaning* involved in this historic "note" of Catholicity. But here again the problem consists in bringing the official connotation of the word into more

living touch with the idea and intention of the Church's Lord. We all respect the old watchword, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus;* but, even waiving the impossibility, he would be a rash guide to-day who undertook to accomplish Unity in the Church solely by help of the Vincentian rule.

To speak without fail "as the voice of Religion itself speaks" was given only on this earth to the Shepherd we have learned to call Divine. Only under His pierced hand, Who qualified by emptying Himself of all earth covets most, Who counted even Godship "no prize to be grasped at," can we now even imagine the separated folds attaining to be called one flock. If therefore the Church of this Good Shepherd is to reveal itself to a divided and disordered world as the united and consequently unifying power He intended, this can only be as the Church develops a Catholic Rule determined less by evidence drawn from prevailing ecclesiastical "uses" than by what is most demonstrably accordant with His spirit and mind.

Organised Christianity in all its forms is everywhere lamenting the indifference of the world. No doubt the world's own worldliness is largely the cause, but it is far from being the only factor. And the Churches have sore need to ask how far they too are responsible for this barren result of

immense labour. What if men are being continually "put off" for lack of evidence of Christ's Spirit in the great Spirit-bearing Body? Think, for example, of the Catholicity of Jesus as portrayed by St. Luke, and compare its outstanding power of appeal with that most familiar in the Churches. So sensitive was this Evangelist to the notes of Freedom and Universality in the Christian Faith that his picture seems peculiarly arresting to the mind of to-day. Beneath all its hard self-sufficiency and apparent contempt the modern world is more than dimly aware how deeply it needs the kind of Saviour of Whom the angels sang, and the peace that is promised to good will. Men still yearn for a Messiah who is not Son of David only, or of Abraham, but Son of MAN. Their hope still anchors on the word—"all flesh shall see the salvation of God." But no gospel can be for them good news, except it be addressed to all people and every grade of life—a gospel for nations tormented and oppressed, having the good physician's special note of tenderness to womanhood—a gospel for the poor, announced with the artist's pleasure in the vivid stories of the Rich Fool, or of Lazarus and Dives, and barbed with the innate Christian antagonism to pride—always pointing the pushful to the Gate of Humility alone leading to Honour in the eyes of God.

When the Church at large really reflects this

great Lucan gospel of holy toleration; when the realities of the Spiritual Order actually break up the crust of convention and routine, strange things of the old kind will happen. For then this spell of God which transforms the outcast citizen, the weeping Magdalene, the very brigand on his cross—this gospel of the lost money and the wandering sheep; of the good Samaritan and the returning Prodigal—this Dominican dictum which canonises Pity and enthrones Forgiveness—in short, this Grace and Truth, divine and indescribable, but palpably incarnate in the Man of men—would once more win the world. This winning influence, reincarnate, or even given free course in that living Body of Christ we call His Church, would infallibly inaugurate a new era, newly distinguished by those "greater things" promised by the Church's Head when His Spirit became the Church's Guide.

Ought we to consider it chimerical to look for a twentieth century Reformation with issues of healing and unity that may cut off the sixteenth century entail of wounds and strife? Is it absolutely impossible that, after this upheaval of all Christendom, a new pentecostal power may enter in and possess it, so that, in the ensuing travail of the nations to construct a habitable world, the example of the Church may be one to follow instead of being one to avoid? Is not that visualising of Truth in the perspective of Christ, that valuing

of the proportions of Faith by the weights and balances He used, which distinguished the Church at the first, a still recoverable talisman?

While the spell of the Master was still strong, the heirs of the Kingdom saw themselves so clearly to be sons and daughters in the family of God; His Gospel of human brotherhood was so woven into the texture of apostolic thought; that a quality of largeness and comprehensiveness marked the early life of the Church, which—facing as we do the dire issues of its disappearance—even the straitest sect among us should now be eager to regain.

As matter of fact, to-day there is no great word commonly applied to Churches—Catholic; Protestant; Free; — which has not become blemished with sectarian assoilment. Every one of them needs to be set anew in the cleansing light of that sacred claim of human need which determined the catholicity of Christ. But Pope Clement's "happy revolution" will only begin to affect Church organisation when the living Spirit of God has penetrated the official mind of Christendom with its Founder's intense conviction of the inwardness of vital religion. Meanwhile it were wise to remember that no great change depends on those that sit in Moses' seat alone; for Churches, no less than nations, are apt to get the kind of government they deserve. It

is upon a widespread general movement, a quickening everywhere of the general mind and will, that Reunion must eventually turn. No otherwise can the demon of division be cast out, and the torn Body begin to recover the wholeness and health it once enjoyed when to continue in one Fellowship was felt to be as natural and necessary as sharing the one Bread and the use of Common Prayer.

III. The fact is that, although for the purposes of study we have to fasten our minds on this or that item of misguided loyalty or wasted energy in the vast problem of Christian Division, yet the deeper we dig in search of the unifying principle most competent to effect a cure, the more certain shall we become that there is no specific short of a genuine *Recovery of the absolute Supremacy of Christ.* For the Church's loss of the Ideal associated with His Name corresponds exactly with her failing allegiance to the Spirit and Teaching of the Lord. For that fundamental fidelity we cannot now substitute the old and scriptural injunction,—"Hear the Church." For in these days of conflicting Churches the counsel leaves us cold. It is true that our Lord Himself said of His Church, "He that heareth you heareth Me." And the words are often cited to justify unlimited hierarchical claims; but, since they imply that one voice is to be the echo of the other, their

force not seldom tells the other way. In whatever degree the Master's voice is drowned,—to that extent demonstrably to "hear the Church" is one thing, and to "hear Him" is another. Such words could only have been spoken by Christ from His habitual standpoint of the Ideal, whence it would appear impossible that teachers knit to Himself in the oneness of branches with the Vine could ever impose upon the world teaching foreign to His own. It is safe to say that no utterance of our Lord on which untenable claims for Church Authority are built was ever given with the least intention of governing the ecclesiastical situation of to-day, or that of mediæval ages.

Does any one imagine, for instance, that there rose before the mind of Jesus a vision of that unhappy time when the Greek spirit, so efficaciously creative in the realms of poetry and science, allowed itself to be carried away into scholastic slavery? That move of the Church to follow the suit of the intellectual world of its own day led direct to the decadence of spiritual religion. The interests of Church aggrandisement soon came to be identified with, and gradually substituted for, spiritual progress. Unlimited license was given to Authority, as the one and only safeguard of the Faith. A flood of pagan adulteration began to submerge the original deposit. The eternally

gracious sovereignty of the Spirit gave way to the dominance of a hard intellectualism saddled with all the disabilities of an ill-instructed age.

Nothing could have been further from the intention of the Church's Lord than the consequent tragedy of human error. Stagnation fell upon the whole healing art, whether applied to soul or body. No physical remedies could be allowed to compete with the auriferous popularity of relics. In fact everything which tended to withdraw the veil of magic and mystery from the secrets of life was thought to imperil the prestige of religion. Whole generations stumbled along in the darkness which unfailingly avenges all crimes against the light. Wars of Religion were fomented. A "holy" Inquisition not only wrecked the Catholicity it was invented to protect, but brought division into the Divine Unity of Truth itself by setting Faith at war with Fact, and thus starting a strife so long maintained that Science and Religion are only in our own day beginning to draw towards an *entente*. For some five hundred years it was the fate of Christendom, in these Dark Ages, to suffer a corruption analogous to that which befell the Jewish Church in the five centuries between Ezra and Christ. As the trivial and meticulous distinctions of scribal lore—gradually assuming an authority equal to that of the Torah itself—developed into an intolerable yoke, so it

proved with Scholasticism, and with the Vaticanism which still keeps alive the scholastic method and tradition. The quaint picture of the Schoolmen evolving their divinity out of their own brains "as spiders do cobwebs out of their own bowels," is not much out of drawing. A score of subtleties would be raised touching this or that mystery about which no Christian had any occasion to trouble his head; yet these fine-spun speculations were not seldom crystallised into dogma, which must then be imposed on all the faithful by virtue of a mandate to speak in Christ's Name!

By such means the eternal principles of Justice, Mercy and Truth, and the essential graces of Faith and Love, began to be tangled up with a philosophical mechanism destined to grow obsolete. The original commission to disciple the nations by handing on to them the Teaching received from Christ and the Apostles was practically abrogated. Vital elements in the spiritual inheritance of mankind fell into obscurity; while the *ægis* of the Church was thrown over glaring deviations from the whole spirit and tenor of the Master's trust. Since nothing has more tended to destroy the unity of Christendom and to keep it disunited, no path of recovery and reconciliation is now conceivable without a process of sifting and simplification in order to liberate the doctrine stressed by Christ Himself from the

complex intellectualistic system which great historic Churches have allowed to corrupt the purity and strangle the freedom of the Faith.

There is, moreover, a clear principle of limitation in the terms of the Founder's original commission which needs to be restored to influence and control. The terms, as recorded by St. Matthew, are—"Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all nations . . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Now whatever views may be held as to this or that Society being sole heir of this delegated trust, the entrusted power, however and to whomsoever transmitted, cannot exceed the permit of its Author. It seems sufficiently clear that "teaching them *what I have commanded*" constitutes a kind of elementary fidelity which should have been accorded paramount place, like that primary Law of Love which was accounted by the Master the first and great command. However the Church might develop, however magnificent the mustard-seed might grow, "whatsoever I have said"—interpreted always in the spirit of the Speaker—must surely be taken to provide the supreme and lasting standard by which to distinguish the necessary from the doubtful, the essential from the comparatively unimportant. No later Pentecostal gift can be quoted to upset the fact that in Christ's view His Apostles and Evangelists

were equipped for their work on certain definite lines. Even the terms of future guidance by the Holy Spirit are explicit: "He taketh of Mine and shall declare it unto you"; "He shall bring to your remembrance all that I said"; and again, "When the Holy Ghost is come upon you, ye shall become witnesses of *Me* unto the uttermost part of the earth."

No words could set forth more clearly the intended supremacy of the Principles and the Personality of Christ as the ruling factor in the witness of His Church.

To suppose, on the other hand, that the Founder of the Christian Faith intended to delegate authority to elaborate His Teaching out of all recognition appears only the more impossible when we reflect that such "liberty of prophesying" would far exceed any that the Master claimed even for Himself. In regard to the content of His Message to mankind Christ never overlooked the subordination expressed in the words, "My Father is greater than I." He is even at the pains to tell us His own rule: "I have made known unto you all things that I have heard from the Father. . . . He gave Me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak: even *as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak.*" Words to the same effect occur repeatedly: "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me." Now it is

unthinkable that any *Ecclesia Docens* has the right to transcend the powers of her Lord. We cannot in reason regard the Church's subservience to Christ as a looser obligation than that defining His own relation to the Father. It becomes therefore inconceivable that Christ ever gave, either to His Apostles and their successors or to the whole body of the faithful, power to frame doctrines, and authority to enforce them as a condition of Fellowship, which not only go beyond but are essentially opposed to the primary principles of the Divine Revelation by which our Lord felt Himself to be bound. Not only did Christ never delegate a power transcending His own, but on the contrary He tells us in so many words that the commission He *did* give closely followed the lines of His own vocation, for He said, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."

The Church will never say to the world, "Go and sin no more," with the voice of the Great Absolver that not only pardons but quickens and empowers, until she can also say with the same justness as her Lord, "He that is of the Truth heareth My voice." When that day dawns, when the Spirit breathed by Christ from the soul of Truth informs the whole range of ecclesiastical Order, *then* the moral consciousness of mankind will confirm the binding and loosing of the Church as it now accepts and ratifies the banning and

blessing of her Lord. Then, too, the corporate witness of the Church to the supremacy of the Christian Ideal will begin to give effect to its unifying power; the miserable divisions, seldom resting upon anything counted cardinal by Christ or His Apostles, will begin to die of inanition; and the discords and separations, now spoiling the fruit of a splendid missionary zeal, will be ready to vanish away.

Christ wields to-day over the minds of men an Empire with which no other can compare. His secret was—"I seek not mine own glory." His Church can only reign on the same terms. The Bride, however fair, is not the Bridegroom for Whom humanity is waiting. Let the Church magnify her office by fulfilling it. Her glory is to be the organ and mirror of the Spirit of her Lord.

There was a company of wonder-workers once of whom men "took knowledge that they had been with Jesus." They seemed to reflect His Presence. As they themselves explained it—"We had beheld His glory, full of Grace and Truth." The Church they represented was neither large nor imposing; but it "turned the world upside down." The world of to-day again needs setting right side up; but the Church that works the change must move once more under the spell of that same regenerating vision. Neither dialectics

nor organisation will ever unite the Church or save the world. The immense questions involved are not in the same plane with matters of custom, rule, or precedent. As to both the Reunion and the Renewal, in the end it comes to this: "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation"—the work of a quickening Spirit. "Now the Lord," said St. Paul, "is the Spirit . . . . and we all, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Spirit which is the Lord." Transfigured thus herself, the Church will transform the world, for she will have recovered her Unity in fulfilling her Vocation.

CHAPTER IV

ROMAN IMMOBILITY

Comparisons, though proverbially odious, often illuminate. The present secular situation is highly suggestive. All non-Germanised Europe, and most of the remainder of the world, are now either fighting for, or sympathising with, the rational aim of "the good European"—namely, a unity which recognises the rights of nationalities to any independence not injurious to the Unity of the Whole called Civilisation. Is not the Body of Christ called also to work for the truly Catholic or Christian ideal—namely, a unity which recognises the right of Churches to such independence as does not jeopardise the Unity of the Whole called Christendom? The real barrier, whether Prussian or Roman, is a corrupt aim, which, denying lawful liberty, demands an abject submission to a single centralised authority.

Now the life and progress of Civilisation fundamentally depend on the reconciliation of the

principles of Order and Freedom,—which is the root-riddle of all Government. In the ecclesiastical sphere these same principles must similarly come to terms, if the failure of Christendom as an organised Spiritual Power in the world is to be ended, and its Unity secured. Here is a problem which the great Spirit-bearing Body, existing to establish the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, *should* be able to resolve more easily than any purely political Power. "Order," we know, "is heaven's first law"; but it is written again that "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty." A favourite synonym for the Gospel, even with the ascetic and austere St. James, was "the law of liberty"; no doubt because for him the holiness of "pure religion" might never be divorced from sympathy.[1]

The one indispensable pre-requisite to any workable relation between the principles of liberty and law is good will. Unity, like peace, is only possible *hominibus bonæ voluntatis*. Here, then, we are brought up short on the very threshold. For of this indispensable good will there unhappily exists no trace in the Roman attitude either toward the Eastern or toward the Anglican Church. In official intercourse with either, nothing appears but the same inadmissible, inflexible claim to constitute in herself alone the one Catholic and

[1] St. James i, 27.

Apostolic Church. There is never an echo from the Vatican of the belief of Orthodox ecclesiastics that no one *part* even of historic Christendom ought to assert a monopoly in Catholicity, since the very expression of such a claim involves a contradiction in terms. If, therefore, the reunion of East and West is thus held up at the start by Roman obstinacy, the chance of any relaxation to meet the Anglican position is *a fortiori* ruled out.

So far as concerns the prospect of reunion, papal politics during the last half century all point one way. The very idea is discouraged even as a subject for prayer. There was that most innocent society for example called the A.P.U.C., which was simply an association of Anglicans and Romans to promote Unity solely by the use of intercessory prayer; yet even such an echo of our Lord's own supplications was condemned by the Pope at the instance of Cardinal Manning. Devout and deeply conscientious men like Lord Halifax seem unable to shake off a belief—the fair child of their high-souled desire—that historical truth may suddenly become of more account in the Roman Curia than ecclesiastical expediency. Hence we have such well-meant attempts as that of 1896 in regard to Anglican Orders. But in such a matter, whatever the show of genuine enquiry, the decision could

be nothing but a foregone conclusion. For here was a case to which Manning's famous ruling out of the reference to history as " in itself a heresy " would pre-eminently apply. How could any verdict strictly based on historical investigation be permitted to rob the Italian Mission for the Conversion of England of one of its longest levers for deciding the doubts of the superstitious ? Cardinal Vaughan could certainly be counted on to leave no stone unturned to preclude the loss of a capital controversial point. Still fresh in the mind, again, is that remarkable exhibition of intransigence—not unstained by cruel and underhand pressure upon the clergy—which marked the Vatican handling of the period of strained relations between Church and State in France. Meanwhile, overshadowing the whole subsequent policy, appears in sinister outline the evil genius of the 1870 decrees, so directly calculated to block the path of reunion between East and West by placing new and needless obstacles in its way.

Were Christendom less divided against itself, it actually might exert over Civilisation just that kind of *moral influence and control* which recent happenings prove to be its deepest need. In this regard, however, one of the most poignant of recent discoveries has been that the candid exercise of Moral Judgment is conspicuous by its absence in the very quarter where the arrogation

of infallibility and the assumption of supreme authority are pressed to the last limit. This generation has lived to endure abominations surpassing any ever before perpetrated by misguided human beings in the mad pursuit of Power. Yet these horrors, proved up to the hilt by irrefutable evidence, have evoked from Benedict XV none of the fierce denunciation which has so often fallen freely from the Papal Chair (as, for recent instance, on pious Modernists),—nothing but a sentence of neutral indifference which His Holiness euphoniously designates " complete impartiality." To be impartial, it appears, is not to judge with justice but to decline to judge at all. Were this novel confusion of the virtue of impartiality with an ignoble neutrality-between-right-and-wrong to become the rule for mankind, Civilisation itself must be utterly lost. Since nothing succeeds like success, the butchery and barbarism of Termonde, Malines, Louvain, Rheims ; the judicial murders of Fryatt and Cavell ; the slave-raids of Roubaix and Lille ; must mark the apex of Culture for the twentieth century and after. When this duty of decision, laid by Christ upon the humblest possessor of a conscience, is publicly repudiated by His Vicar, what emerges before the eyes of the world is not " complete impartiality " but complete moral abdication. For here is no reminder of the glorious silent Christ abashing the

accusers of frailty, but simply the expediency of a moribund imperialism washing its hands before the multitude. And what falls upon our ears is not the impartial voiçe of Holiness: "Depart," ye that have accurst yourselves by nameless crimes; but the "See ye to it" of anxiety for temporal power declining the duty of pronouncing the verdict of Truth.

No Pontiff since the sixteenth century has had, and missed, so splendid an opportunity to proclaim *urbi et orbi* that mercy and judgment—the weightier matters of the law—stood first with him as they stood first in the mind of Christ. Here was Humanity assailed by a resurgence of the grossest barbarities which ever accompanied a shameless example of aggressive war; and it must go down as history that the Infallible Head of the largest Christian Communion—the Communion more eager than any other to "stand as Judge in her own cause"—stood paralysed and dumb, at the critical moment for a just and courageous discrimination between Good and Evil. How can so glaring an instance of moral impotence have any other effect than to drive mankind—inexpressibly weary of the slow death of Tyranny, yet still fiercely thirsting for the reign of Justice—out of all patience with Popes, Churches, and War-lords alike? Who can be surprised if men turn for a truly impartial award, and for effective

vindication of right, anywhere but to a Christendom which fails so signally, through its most highly placed Representative, either to produce the one or to defend the other ?

Is an episode like this irrelevant to our immediate subject of Reunion ? Surely not. With the official attitude of the Vatican in so fundamental a matter as the exercise of Moral Judgment, the potential relation of all other Churches to the Papacy is inextricably involved. Is it for nothing that we see the moral and spiritual issues, which Christ invariably stressed, most flagrantly slighted just where the dogmatic claim to universal authority is made most absolute ? No external relation towards the Roman Curia can fail to be affected by such a display of compromise with temporarily ascendant evil. Between such weakness in the domain of morals and the strong antagonism shown whenever Roman dogma or Papal authority is questioned—the contrast strikes like a blow. For in these last cases—whether affecting the Unity of Christendom or not—the Curial line is found to be no less unbending than when pride completed the division of East and West, or confirmed by persecution the schisms consequent upon the Reformation. Those Anglicans who to-day condemn this great historical necessity, and deplore the association of their Church with some vital principles of the sixteenth century

awakening, must be held to suffer from what Bishop Butler used to call "shortness of thought." For the happenings of a period now extending to some four hundred years afford abundant proof that the influential future of Christendom is certainly bound up with the parts allied with the Reformed Faith, and not with the parts that made the Great Refusal. Evidence of this will appear in the next chapter; but on the face of things it is sufficiently clear that for Religion to cut itself off from a movement which gave fresh impulse to every form of mental activity, and brought new wealth to the whole intellectual world, could only in the long run prove suicidal. Official repudiation of a general renaissance of thought destined to become the most powerful and permanent force in modern history needs only enough persistence to make it fatal. For even Churches must eat of the fruit of their doings.

To what profit does this still mighty Organisation of the West gather her shrinking strength in proud isolation, if her ruling light is mainly borrowed from the darker ages of a perished past; if the present bears for her no promise of renascent life; if among the heralds of her future can be discerned neither the arresting figure of moral dignity, nor any efficacious sign of power to inspire the world with the Spirit of Christ? When this stately hierarchy will find grace to throw off the Caesarean

dreams of over-lordship which have been its age-long bane, we cannot tell. There remains, perhaps, a hope that Armageddon itself may possibly reveal, in the lurid light of other fields, the true nature of the phantasy which always and everywhere blights, but cannot bless. Once relieved of the depraving hunger for a barren dominance, this wonderful system, so incomparably organised, so admirable in its wealth of individual devotion, might arise to unimagined heights of spiritual influence and leadership. Purged of antique ambitions which can neither animate nor edify, the historic Church of the West might easily become the splendid envoy of the Coming Day which the pre-war world in vain awaited. It might stand forth as God's Angel gathering all Christendom together to salute the dawn of a New Age, when the Church of the living God shall become One in the Freedom of Christ, and begin to exert a really recognisable influence in shaping the general mind and will of the world.

It seems worth while, then, trying to realise what stands in the way. Who can fail to trace the whole complex tangle of obstruction to one root?—the obstinate intransigence which Rome persists in mistaking for fidelity. Nothing, in dealing with a world itself plainly still in the making, can be more fatal than to make a pride

of Immobility. Yet Rome officially stands for the most resolute ecclesiastical opposition to the truth that Christianity has always been a movement, and that the stewardship of the Faith must primarily consist in carrying on this movement. It stands for a systematic ignoring of the truth that "Christianity is not a dogmatic system, nor an ethical code, but a personal life." It stands for the assertion that the living theology of a living Church can never admit necessity for change; and for blindness to the undeniable fact that the whole history of the Church is made up of a constant series of changes; and that, when its institutional life changed least, it retrogressed. Romanism, in short, figures as the most thoroughgoing example in organised Christianity of the too common refusal to take account of events which, under the evolutionary government of God, are always altering the conditions of human life. It therefore conspicuously illustrates the obscurantist view of duty which sacrifices facts to theory in the search for truth, and life to machinery in presenting religion to mankind.

With Rome it is always a question of a dogma, or a rite, either handed down by uniform repetition or arbitrarily distorted, as the case may be; it is never the question of "a life again and again kindled afresh and now burning with a flame of its own." Hence the official investigator is easily

lost in the forest of historical phenomena, and has little interest in distinguishing essence from accident, reality from traditional report. He seems to lack the fundamental insight which gave the really great historians of his own Obedience—men like von Ranke and Lord Acton—the power to see all happenings in the light of a supreme Purpose slowly fashioning a great organic whole. And thus he misses the main thing in the whole matter of historical evolution, and in the evolution of Religion which is the soul of History, namely, that all records come at last to certain Ideas which attain to effectiveness and power through their possession of men's hearts and minds. These governing ideas, like the standards of judgment which determine their destiny, whether towards development and ascendancy or towards decay and disappearance, are always liable to change. Not the physical only, but the mental and moral world is still in the making. From the fiery tests of Time the genuinely true and vital at last come forth as gold, while the merited condemnation is perpetually being measured out to the unreal and the false. Thus the true point at issue, the cardinal pivot upon which most theological controversy actually turns, is simply this : the admission or the rejection of scientific method in the ascertainment of truth.

Those in our own day like Döllinger, St. George

Mivart, Tyrrell, and plenty of others less well known, who have suffered, some more, some less, at the hands of the Roman Church, have suffered on the same identical principle for which Galileo was persecuted and Giordano Bruno burnt. They were all alike victims of a wrong method for ascertaining truth. In the sixteenth century the old unproved geocentric theory which required the sun to go round the earth was part of the Church's tradition; therefore it must come first; and if the facts showed something else, well, so much the worse for the facts, and for all who clung to them. By degrees of course truth comes to its own despite traditional error; and to-day no doubt Roman Catholic children in primary schools would not think of denying a fact of nature which once it cost men their lives to assert. But the root whence springs that "maze of contradictions" which many modern Romans themselves lament is the old mediæval fallacy of starting from assumptions, and proceeding by deduction, instead of starting with facts and building theory on the factual evidence.

This method of the Schoolmen was simply an ecclesiastically accepted "modernism" of the Middle Age, far enough removed from the original conception of Catholic theology. This building on merely theoretical and often mistaken premisses, this confining of all expansion and development

to the lines of deductive reasoning, had its logical result in a rigid doctrinal structure, bound together by changeless laws of formal thought, with its parts so interlocked that to make a single concession to truth is to imperil the whole fabric. That is why every discovery, even every rational inquiry, threatening this vulnerable edifice must perforce be ruthlessly repressed. But repression of truth as a permanent policy is always impossible. The evolutionary movement of the last three centuries has firmly installed the Baconian inductive method in all secular fields, and in the domain of religion the Reformation liberated for ever the free forces of faith, with reason not as their enemy but as their ally. The Church of Christ exists to win the world; and what men everywhere feel to-day is that "if the Church is a society for the maintenance of a close and defined system of theology it has no message for them, and has as little claim to be taken seriously as a society of chemists which should take for its purpose not the discovery and propagation of chemical truth, but the preservation of the scientific theories of the Middle Ages."[1] Were Catholicism to return simply to the older vogue in theology prevailing before Scholasticism laid its dead hand on the human intellect, this alone would constitute a real advance. But the plain fact is that a state of things in which scientists

[1] *Stewardship of Faith*, by Prof. Lake, p. 169.

go one way and theologians another can never last; because the natural craving for synthesis in knowledge is too irrepressible.

If the magnificent Aquinas himself had visited our planet some 350 years after his exodus, his astute mind would certainly have recognised the hopeless cracking of the Aristotelian concrete on which so much of his *Summa Theologiæ* is built: he might easily have been one of the first to absolve the generations following Francis Bacon from the worship of Thomist *Idola Theatri*; and, had this second earthly sojourn been prolonged, no one would have better understood what it must mean when men became so imbued with Kant that (as Goethe put it) the minds of those who had not even read him fell under his influence. The scholastic grip is equally deadly whether it be given by a Doctor Angelicus or an inhuman Calvin; and attempts to rescue reason, revelation, and religion from this paralysing method have never ceased from the ninth to the nineteenth century—from John Scotus Erigena to Father Tyrrell. Apparently these efforts are destined to fail right up to the time, not now far off, when they will become superfluous. Meanwhile, from the arid triumphs of the scholiast the whole range of Mystical Christianity has afforded welcome relief. And many a fine mind among convinced Roman Catholics, like that of Baron von

Hügel,[1] has known how to turn from the hard, static systematisation of Thomas to the refreshing "*élan*, dynamism" of Augustine; or perhaps to find honey in the carcase, as, after hard digging at the *Summa*, he reaches the "deeply Christian current" where "God, the very cause of all things moves out of Himself by the abundance of His loving goodness," and where "the multitude and diversity of natures in the universe proceed directly from the intention of God, Who brought them into being, so as to communicate His goodness to them and to have it represented by them."

But such passages are no more typical of the famous treatise at the base of Roman theology than the mental equipment of the elect spirit who quotes them is typical of the great organisation his fidelity adorns. When, for example, will official Rome find the ἐπιείκεια to promulgate such sentiments as these?—

"The Church's excommunications are admittedly fallible; hence exclusions and consequent schisms are not of necessity simply the fault of those excluded. And even where such fault seems clear, we very soon find unmistakable evidence of various degrees of truth and of grace in the souls that grow up in these separate organisations. . . . The very

[1] In that illuminating book, *Eternal Life*, which puts the whole Christian Church under fresh obligation to the author, it is perhaps not without significance that ten pages out of 400 suffice for the discussion of the great master of scholastic lore, while Kant occupies forty, and the philosophies derived from him a further 100.

great variety among the types of spirituality represented well within the Roman Church by different periods, different religious orders, and different theological schools, points towards this very important, indeed essential, breadth and manysidedness. It appears only necessary that all this larger, gentler, and deeply Christian current shall become universal and instinctive, for Roman Catholicism once again, and more than ever, to become fully lovable and entirely trusted." [1]

Perhaps, good Baron, it is not quite the " only " need ; although when the Vatican agrees with you " that now, for many a day, the persuasiveness of the Church is in inverse ratio to her coercive character and action,"[2] we could certainly cease to regard it as the fortress and home of the mentality most hostile to Christian Reunion. To be honest, however, there are one or two other matters that still look very awkward from outside.

Take for example the Roman notion of Development. By all means let us credit Newman with applying the theory, so far as his bondage to authority allowed him, years before Darwin and Spencer worked it into their systems of science and philosophy. But it never helped Newman to realise Christianity as a germinating principle intended to permeate civilisation in all its variety. He was only interested in so far as the idea might affect a visible, growing structure having only one legitimate form. We, on the other hand,

[1] *Eternal Life*, p. 352. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 354.

can take little interest in the three principles, in honour of which he elaborated his seven tests for distinguishing a corruption from a true development, when he proceeds to set up as final criterion a Pope whose infallibility is itself a crowning instance of false evolution. For this involves an outrage on history and logic too. History is dishonoured; since no doctrinal change simply commanded by external authority can ever exemplify a free historical development. Logic is shamed; since a glaring instance of modern corruption, namely, the single infallible Arbiter, is made sole judge of what a true development means. As to this the Cardinal leaves no room for doubt: "For by Infallibility, I suppose, is meant the power of deciding whether this, that, and a third, or any number of theological or ethical statements are true."[1]

By these simple means, those who succeed in retaining enough of the Mediæval mind can wash their hands of all critico-historical labour; and the way is clear for the announcement, for instance, of three brand new articles of faith such as were promulgated by the Vatican Decrees of 1870, or for any other judgment based solely on a supposed expediency, such as those of the encyclicals of 1893 and 1907. The latter, *Pascendi Gregis*, not only cut at the foundations of all civil and

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*; Ninth Edition; ch. ii., § 4.

religious liberty by declaring the place of the laity to be purely passive in the Church, but it also resuscitated the defunct dogma of the Verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture, which both the Councils of Trent and of the Vatican had carefully avoided, and which one of the finest of Biblical scholars, Bishop Westcott, declared to be "at variance with the whole form and fashion of the Bible, besides being destructive of all that is holiest in man and highest in Religion." Well may the Romanist exclaim in despair that such official deliverances of the Holy See "land us in a maze of difficulties and contradictions whence the wit of man is unable to find an issue."[1] Well might Ferdinand Brunetière, one of the most brilliant of recent adherents to the Papacy, answer to a friend's question as to what he really thought and believed, "O you must go and ask them that at Rome"—an example of vicarious faith which seems now to have commended itself even to Anatole France.

We know that the writings of Father Tyrrell labour under the ban which denounced their Modernism as "the summary of all the heresies." But the greater part of the Christian world will continue to sympathise with the heretic while it believes that the principle at the root of the quarrel was rather moral than intellectual—

[1] Article in *The Contemporary Review*, April, 1894.

" a question less of truth than of truthfulness, inward and outward ; of a vigorous honesty with oneself that makes a man ask continually : Is this what I really do think, or only what I think that I think, or think that I ought to think, or think that others think ? " For the non-mediæval mind appreciates at once how this sort of digging down to foundations was bound to clash with Roman rule, which negates any real introduction of the evolutionary principle into religion.

Among those for whom no opinion not hall-marked at the Vatican is legitimate, there could be only one fate for an audacity that held and taught that " the only infallible guardian of Truth is the spirit of Truthfulness." For this was to counter completely the static and mechanical idea of ecclesiastical infallibility which ultramontanism substituted, by a kind of bastard evolution, for the great Conciliar expression of the Christian consciousness which alone would afford the genuinely Catholic instrument both for the restating and reinstating of the doctrine and ideal of Christ, and for enabling them to develop freely in the modern world.

But the truth is that the Latin Communion has always shown itself incurably opposed to any idea of vital development. Manning's view that to refer theology to history involves a kind of

treason to Church Authority is much more truly representative of Roman officialdom than Newman's essays in doctrinal evolution. The Vatican is always hostile to any evolution of doctrine by way of living growth. From its point of view there can be no vital development, but only mechanical unpacking. But here, as Professor Swete has justly said, the truth was more with Newman's endeavours than with the attitude of Pius X towards the Modernists. As our Anglican doctor incisively put it: "Doubtless the deposit held the whole sum of Christian ideas; but it held them as the acorn holds the oak, not as a box holds properties ready for use. A genuine evolution can produce nothing which was not potentially in the germ; but the acorn does not grow into the oak without the co-operation of soil, and air, and rain. . . . Christian doctrine is evolved by the ordinary processes of human thought and experience."[1]

Thus "the spirit of truthfulness" must be allowed free course. The rival guardian of truth, the Infallible Pope who emerged in 1870, has too often shown himself the tool of the most mischievous elements in the Curia to command the allegiance of Christendom. The tendency of recent Roman Encyclicals has made for the condemnation of the immanent and experiential character of

[1] Lecture at Sion College.

all Religion so far as it is a revelation from God, and toward the denial in human nature of a religious sense, which (according to St. Paul) is capable of "feeling after God," and which continually finds Him in the faith of Christ. Yet these views are not only a genuine part of the psychological inheritance of Christendom but also ineradicable possessions of the modern mind. Why quarrel with the judgment of our time if it places the origin of religion in the very constitution of human nature, and regards it as a vital movement of the soul rather than as a purely intellectual process? Surely the part of a living Church is not to refuse to cast off dead values when their death is assured; for this can only lead into temptation, and help to justify, unbalanced purveyors of "New Theology."

Instead of merely falling back impotently on the past, surely the Church should emulate the ideal scribe "instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven," who was enjoined by the Master Himself to bring forth out of his treasure "things new and old." Perhaps they have ears to hear who conclude that "a Church which, in the twentieth century, deliberately takes its stand on the philosophy of the Middle Ages, repudiates one half of Christ's instruction; while the Modernist who abandons the Catholic Faith repudiates the other." Anyhow we can already see how true a prophet was Archbishop Temple, who, some sixty years

ago (1857), after observing that "our theology has been cast in a scholastic mode, i.e., all based on logic," immediately added, "we are in need of, and we are gradually being forced into, a theology based on psychology." And this also seems pretty certain, that the notes of a Church capable to-day of promoting among mankind that Kingdom not of this world which cometh not with observation—still less by force or fraud—must assuredly include a studious abandonment of any air of arrogance or presumption; a pointed forsaking of those fetishes of the moment, —material power and ultra-organisation—and every appearance which might risk men's confusing Christ's Church with the old superseded engine of imperious pagan lordship, with its pitiless centralisation, impoverishing exploitation, and unbridled self-aggrandisement. From all this, the actual evolution of human society is carrying us right away; and so *a fortiori* must any true evolution of Religion.

We know how age after age the worship of intellectual idols has been almost as constant as man's undying devotion to the golden calf. But the Church of Christ, since its most precious things are avowedly "spirit and life," might surely have been expected not to cling to schemes and systems with a tenacity to be found in no other field. "The Church was pledged to the communi-

cation of Christ's life and light and truth to men. It was pledged to the movement of life, and to the indwelling of the Spirit that moves in life. Its Lord wrote down no commands, gave no code of laws, propounded no system, taught no science, and did not theologise." The changes He initiated in thought both fulfilled the approximations to truth which they displaced and sowed the seeds of future change. He uttered living principles, capable of endless development and endowed with endless life—and these He entrusted to His Church.

The time is near when the mind of the Church —in so far as it misrepresents the mind of Christ —must change, or see its appointed work pass to other hands. Not only the great Roman system, but every other system which seeks to incorporate Christ's Religion, must seriously take itself to task, or be content to wither away. No Church can be fit for survival and go on blinding itself to the manifest light of God, and to the sin involved in its denial.

Any Church purged of self-aggrandisement would free itself of many foibles. Impatient of no rivalry save that of evil it would cast off for ever all enmity to science, and perhaps learn some lessons taught by its success. Only supreme folly can promote schism even in the very oneness of God's truth.

Let Religion and Science cease to wrong one another, either by confounding the diverse spheres of their beneficence, or by each claiming a monopoly in the welfare of mankind. Of the two, Religion has least excuse for jealousy and should be foremost in good example. For no limits of human power bound her resources, nor is her aid confined to any temporal human need. Can science satisfy the spirit of man ? Can it regenerate the character or purify the soul ? God has set eternity in the hearts of men, but science cannot cope with this, nor inspire the aims which match man's measureless inheritance. Therefore the opportunity of the Church—if it speak as religion itself speaks—is incalculably greater than any within range even of the splendours of scientific skill. As time and space present no barriers to the great society of the noble living and the noble dead, uniting heaven and earth ; so from the Church nothing should be alien, whether human or divine.

But the " Well done " of the Church's Lord is not determined by the extent of opportunity but by its use. The reward of rule and influence falls to the right using and not to the mere holding of great possessions. The few talents may, by wise methods, produce more than the many. We have been freely told of late that, despite religion's profound appeal to the moral nature of man, " the sons of God are everywhere forsaking

the Church to seek Him where He may be found without our hindering." How does this come to pass ? We hear that " in Italy, in France, in Austria, even in Spain ; in America, both North and South, and in our own country, dominions and colonies, the Church stands before men not as a city set on a hill to bear witness to the salvation of men's hearts' desire, to the eternal truth in which every truth of ours is fulfilled ; but as a fortress set about with walls, behind which its craven defenders find their last refuge from a conquering world."[1]

Faithful are the wounds of a friend. We may account this picture a little overdrawn, but we may not therefore dismiss it from our minds, for there is, unhappily, evidence enough of the truth of its main lines. This chapter began with a comparison ; let it end with another, tending to show that capacities more restricted than those of the Church may be banked to such profit as at least to provoke her emulation.

Surely the faith of ecclesiasticism has something to learn from the faith of science, which is rooted—

" not in systems or external authorities, but in experience enlarging through experiment and by the discovery of new facts. The authority of science and of its hypotheses is that of a collected, collated, and organised experience. It changes where that changes. Because it is submissive to

[1] *Faith or Fear*, p. 64 (Macmillan), 1916.

truth it comes before men with the power of truth. It is respected, appealed to, valued, used. . . . Science is indeed a city set on a hill; its streets are thronged; and its ways and wealth are spread abroad among men. It is cosmopolitan, catholic; its mind is altering all our minds, whether we know of it or not; nor has it any need of walls or defenders, since no wise man is consciously its enemy."[1]

If, as the Master taught, Christianity might learn something even from the provident methods of a faithless steward, we need not hesitate to learn from a stewardship of opportunity which has been no less just and true than successful.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 68.

CHAPTER V

ANGLICAN OPPORTUNITY

THE best thought of the whole Christian world is now more alive than it has been for centuries to the necessity of removing the scandal of Disunion. It is felt that the controlling authority of organised Religion has broken down, and that if Christianity is to guide and inspire human life in the future, such influence cannot be effectively exerted by an Institution divided against itself. But while nothing short of a Reunion of all Christendom can ever satisfy the aspirations of a disciple of Christ, yet in so gigantic an enterprise, unless a miracle were to happen, piecemeal effort on independent lines is the only possible course to pursue for some time to come with any promise of success. Definite work steadily pressed in different areas will be far more efficacious than a diffusion of force in vague general endeavour. There appears great hope that an immense force of Christian enthusiasm favourable to Reunion may be gener-

ated in the near future ; but this zeal will achieve no tangible results unless it finds its way into the channels actually open to receive it. Those that are plainly closed must be left to the unsealing influences of the future. Some day, when the whole atmosphere of Christendom is sufficiently charged with that spirit of Unity, which is the Spirit of God, Christendom in all its parts will equally *desire* Reunion ; and then those partial unities which should now be made our immediate aim will readily converge to crown the undertaking.

It is sometimes thought that the English National Church as the admitted exponent of the *Via Media* must needs occupy a very advantageous position from which to improve the prospects of unity in Christendom. But a gift for compromise or even for comprehension is no guarantee of mediatorial influence. To stand midway between Catholic and Protestant, to believe in conserving the best in the ideals of both, and to aim at a working combination of their antinomies, is to become suspect in both quarters. Nor is such suspicion allayed by the patent fact that the capacious fold of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* shelters many who regard with aversion the leaning of others towards almost every distinctively Roman belief save that which finds virtue in obedience. Since Churches, no more than individuals, can escape the defects of their qualities, it would perhaps

be well for us Anglicans to realise more than many do the weakness as well as the strength of a position in some respects unique.

It may be well to clear the ground by observing that there are two spheres of the Unity campaign which evidently lie outside the Anglican field of endeavour. Towards the reunion of Greek and Latin Christianity, which would open so many wide avenues of help for the healing of the nations, no official contribution can so much as be offered by a Church whose very Orders are denied by East and West alike. Similarly, as to the very different scene of multifarious division in non-episcopal Protestant bodies. It is sufficiently plain that here, for some time yet, the hopeful coalition movement now going on will be far better aided by the larger Free Church organisations, sometimes described as orthodox Nonconformity, than by any direct assistance from the National Church.

In each of these widely different regions the mind and spirit engendered in the process of forming an independent unity should go far to prepare the Churches that find this grace for the wider and completer unification of the future. The great era of full Christian cooperation is not likely to dawn until, on the one hand, Patriarch and Pope have taken the necessary steps to heal their own schism; nor until, on the other hand, the great outlying mass of sectarian religion

(which has produced more small societies in England alone than there were individual Christians in the Church of Jerusalem at the Ascension of Christ) yields to the unifying spirit now so happily engaged in reducing what is often a meaningless dissidence.

The Unity campaign, no less in the Church than in the World, can only be brought to a successful issue by independent endeavour working bravely on various fronts. Each gain regarded separately may appear so trifling and partial as to be wholly unworthy of the great goal to be finally reached; nevertheless it will be the sum of these independently conducted successes that will constitute the final victory. Therefore the smallest contributory diligence in keeping or regaining a unity of spirit which may grow into a bond of peace helps to advance the final consummation; and no piece-meal effort is to be despised because the day is still far off when all the results can be combined.

In these circumstances: What should be the present attitude and aim of the English Church in reference to Reunion regarded as a whole? To begin with, we must expect to pay the price for our distinguishing virtue in having adopted at the instance of sound learning the difficult part of resolute fidelity to Catholic Order along with the maintenance of important Reformation

principles. Romaniser and Puritan alike are prone to scout this position as one of weakness; while the convinced Anglican will glory in a semblance of infirmity which secures in fact an accession of strength. But, for better for worse, the history and the formularies, the ordinal and liturgy of the Church, clearly exhibit its middle place in the Christian world. And for a Communion thus historically constituted, with roots and arms that stretch out into all Christendom, it is plain that a choice must needs be made as to the main trend of its aim and action, unless we are merely to drift from frigid inactivity to barren isolation.

Now except for some abortive episcopal attempts in the early part of the eighteenth century, unpopular with a generally ill-informed clergy, all the most notable Anglican movements towards Christian Unity have been more inspired by the beauty of Catholic Order than by appreciation of Protestant Freedom. From the now distant days of the Laudian divines Anglican piety of a high order has been continually inclined towards an understanding with Rome, to be effected, either directly, or by help of a preliminary *entente* with the historic Church of the East. But, whatever may have been feasible in other times, the utter futility to-day of these spirited and scholarly attempts robs their admirable intention of practical value. Sir Edward Grey had as much chance

with Prussian Junkerthum as Lord Halifax and his friends ever had with the Papacy. And that is no chance at all; for the simple reason that unity, peace, and concord are always secondary in the minds of Pope and Kaiser to the primary ambition to dominate—always of course for the good of the Church or the World as the case may be. When the holder of a great position comes to imagine himself the Vicegerent of God, the case is hopeless; because, then, to offer any terms except those of abject submission (however intolerable to others) is not to practise Christian charity, but to betray a Divine trust.

Why not face facts? Although not on exactly similar grounds, the validity even of our Orders is doubted by the Greek and denied by the Latin Church. Yet the average Anglican seems unwilling to realise that, from this point of view, the Episcopal Churches of England and of America are simply schismatic bodies; with less excuse for rejecting the control of Patriarch or Pope than many English Churchmen are willing to allow to dissenters from their own Communion.

It seems simple folly to blind ourselves to the extreme intransigence of the fixed policy of the Roman Curia. Adverting to our parable, we all recollect the intense reluctance of this country to accept the fact of a Pan-German will-to-war for Power. We went on to the last hoping against

hope that the sane element in the general life of the community would assert itself sufficiently to protect Germany, and Europe too, from the consequences of Prussian pride and the curse of a demented Nationalism. Well, English Churchmen have been no less sanguine of the gradual triumph of reason and light over the forces of reaction and exclusiveness at the Vatican. Hence all manner of approaches no less surely destined to failure than were the diplomatic efforts wasted in trying to heal, by treatment without operation, the Prussian cancer in the body of Europe.

But the moral of the parable lies in its reminder that, when the Statesmen who were bent on following the stars of political unity and permanent peace were at last convinced of the hopeless recalcitrance of the Central Empires, *they proceeded to save the situation by striking out another line.* They ceased knocking at doors sealed up by ambition; but steadily continued to obey the supreme call of unity for civilisation at large. In fact they followed the line which circumstances largely parallel in the ecclesiastical sphere now urge upon the statesmanship of our National Church. The eventual goal of a united Christendom can only come nearer by creating new combinations founded on closer alliance with those ordered parts of the great Christian Society which have learned to value the life and liberty of the

Whole more highly than the aggrandisement of a Part. We have seen what can be done by boldly uniting the nations that believe in Liberty at least no less than they believe in Order and Organisation. It is not too much to say that this method has saved the European situation. Were the same suit to be followed in the sphere of Churches, the consequent unification of forces would do no less to revivify the whole of Christendom. Some of the alliances consequent on this policy among nations have shown surprising features, which raised grave doubts and fears, and even excited anxious protest in some quarters. The same may be expected if the ecclesiastical counterpart of this policy were to find official favour. But Time would assuredly justify its wisdom in the one case no less than in the other.

All parables and comparisons apart, my contention is that, once the true attitude and constantly asserted aim of the Papacy are realised, they must be accepted as deciding factors in shaping the bent of any rational policy on the part of the Anglican Church in its efforts to promote unity in the Christian world. The naked truth must be squarely faced that Rome has no use for Union, but only for the Submission that negates it. There is in this absolutism a semblance of grandeur which fascinates a certain type of mind. But it is not the grandeur of Christianity,

and presents a perfect contrast to the glory of Christ. Regarded as a policy: it is fated to fail in the case of Churches, as in the long run it has always failed in the case of nations.

Now when Christianity first found itself confronted with this same dragon of exclusiveness, in guise of Jewish intransigence, the apostolic course was very decisively taken, and taken by a leader deeply saturated with a sense of the value and prestige of the Old Covenant under which he had been born and bred. The incident of Cenchrea —the fellowship of the vow—showed the lengths to which St. Paul was willing to go in order to win the Jews. Yet this Hebrew of the Hebrews well knew that there was an impassable limit of principle to which his Christlike longing to be all things to all men must yield. That point clearly reached, there is no hesitation. "Seeing ye thrust the truth from you . . . . lo, we turn to a wider world, for so hath the Lord commanded us." The resolute words recall another voice—the voice of one less wise indeed but no less bold—exclaiming, at a crisis in the later annals of the Faith: "I neither can nor dare retract. My conscience is a captive to God's Word. Here stand I; for I can no other, so help me God. Amen."

If Paul and Barnabas became the Moses and Aaron of a spiritual Exodus wholly justified by its sequel, there was perhaps a touch of Joshua

in the leadership of Luther. His noble Hymn became the *Marseillaise*[1] of a new era. In the long perspective we see this spiritual giant neither as "a second Mohammed"—archest of arch-heretics—*nor* riding Carlyle's glory-cloud, as "the most inspired of all teachers since the first apostles of his faith." But it is vain to deny that, on the whole, these four centuries have registered a verdict for this "breaker of the fetters of spiritual narrow-mindedness" as he appeared to Goethe. Part of his work, as when he raised the Bible from its burial in the dust of libraries, was for ever. And the twentieth century still needs no less than the sixteenth such prophets as Archdeacon Hare accounted Luther—"with whom Religion is not a thing of words and phrases, not a thing of habit and custom, of convention and tradition, but an intense, vivid reality, which governs the pulses of his heart and the motions of his will."

This description of religion applies with even fuller justice to Pauline Christianity; for the great Apostle of the Gentiles was anything but the dogmatic system-monger for whom he has sometimes been mistaken. The Faith which this mightiest of missionaries carried to "the utmost bounds of the West" was a religion of the Spirit, continually to be re-vitalised by an ever-living

[1] In Auden's *Life of Luther*, his Psalm—*Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*—is thus described.

Christ. No one of those who companied with Jesus in the flesh, not excepting even His bosom-friend, maintained a more vividly conscious oneness with the Life of all lives than did this "chosen vessel" of the grace of God. The secret of all his exploits, the key of his very existence, lie open in his own phrase—"not I, but Christ that liveth in me." For no other of its champions in any age was Christianity so completely summed in the personality and principles of its Founder. Had Luther for instance fully shared this Christly spirit, he would have understood the Christianity of St. James, instead of dismissing his noble letter as a mere epistle of straw, and would have found in the gospel according to Paul much that he badly needed but entirely missed. Nevertheless, they were Pauline watchwords that kindled anew those fires of faith which not only flamed up in Luther's soul, but grew into great beacons on the hills of time. This magnetic man embodied in extraordinary degree those new spiritual forces which were destined to shift the centre of gravity of Christ's Religion, considered as a spiritual power in the world. The foundations of Faith, broadened by closer alliance with the reason and conscience, were at the same time deepened by a new approximation to the Founder's teaching.

In Luther's own land, however, another side to the shield soon came to be remarkable. For

we find so Germanophile a writer as Carlyle declaring that there "Protestantism soon dwindled into a rather barren affair: not a religion of faith, but rather now a theological jangling of argument; the proper seat of it not the heart; the essence of it sceptical contention." And he proceeds to compare the German results of the new movement with those achieved in Scotland, to the great disadvantage of the former. To-day, indeed, it is plain that the sinister discovery of Rohrbacher[1] of a brotherly resemblance between Turkish ethics and Teuton faith must remain for a new German Reformation to annul, when the sound of the terrible *Amen* set by history to Rohrbacher's discernment has died away; and devastated Belgium, Serbia, Poland and Armenia are restored. Meanwhile the world is witness that the latest phase of German Christianity—Protestant *and* Catholic—has proved an easy target for the

[1] "Un frère ne ressemble pas plus à son frère que le Luthéranisme au Mahométisme," says Rohrbacher; (Histoire Universelle, xii., p. 145)—surely a remarkable comment when read in the Turco-German after-light of 1915. For we have lived to see the Superintendent-General of the Prussian State Church in the province of Schleswig confounding war with religion like a true disciple of Islam. In his last book, *We Christians and the War*, Prussian aggression appears as a crusade against surrounding heathendom, so that, for Dr. Kaftan, "War is Christianity," and "if we can make our bullets, bombs, and torpedoes more cruel and destructive, of course we shall do it. . . . May yet a hundred more Zeppelins visit their war wrath on England!" and so forth. On which the comment of the Berlin *Reichsbote*—the official organ of the Church of Prussia—is: "We re-echo the author's words from the bottom of our hearts."

shafts of Antichrist—the real Anti-Christ, for whom not even a Cromwell or a Bunyan could now mistake the poor Pope. Although the end is not yet, and the curious corruption clinging to the will-to-war is incalculable, there is every ground to expect that Anglo-Saxon, Slav, and Latin Christendom will at least emerge from the present Inferno uninfluenced by Moslem bias in favour of Jehads delighting in war, and of war's most shameless degradation into ordered massacre of non-combatants.

As things are, it is a relief to reflect that the religious cataclysm of the sixteenth century led in Germany to a sequel by no means identical with that in other countries affected by the Reformation. The Scandinavian Reformers, for instance, like those of the English Church, have been justified of wiser courses. They, no less than Luther, were forced to launch out afresh when they came up against the adamantine arrogance of the Papacy; but their sorting of the cargo of the Ship of Faith was better done, as subsequent developments bear witness.

Our concern however, now, is with the twentieth century, not with the sixteenth. And my whole point is that the time has clearly come to cease fomenting separations and to work unceasingly for Unity between peoples and Churches *willing to unite.* "If the members of the broken sects

of the Church will come together, not (merely) to discuss how they may patch up differences, regulate machinery, organise campaigns, enforce morality and belief upon an indifferent world, but to look beyond these things for a wider vision and a stronger faith . . . . there will be born again a force which can inspire men, not singly here and there . . . . but in masses . . . . to give themselves" for a larger Christianity and a better world.[1]

But if in such an enterprise the Anglican Church is to bear a part in keeping with her best traditions, I submit that she must make up her mind afresh, and show her hand anew, in favour of the freedom of the Spirit as against the bondage of the letter. We cannot take our part by merely facing both ways, moving nowhere, and doing nothing but drift on a Dead Sea of isolation. On what principle of fundamental Christianity ought we to remain blind and deaf to the voices and activities now so clear and manifest in those quarters where a genuine desire for Reunion undoubtedly exists? Has the National Church of England no mission to support, encourage, and—as far as ever it can be found possible—*meet* this widespread movement of thought? Throughout the whole of the now far larger part of Christendom which refused to repudiate the Reformation this leaven is busily

[1] Essay of A. C. Turner in *Concerning Prayer* (Macmillan), 1916.

at work. If we remain impassive, we shall certainly incur the old reproach: "How is it that ye cannot interpret this time?"

If, on the other hand, we persist in looking only in the opposite direction, who can forecast what precise degree of decline has to be reached before expediency will dictate new courses to the Roman Curia and the Holy Synod? It is however safe to say, as to the former, that every nerve of a well-disciplined organisation will be strained to postpone the inevitable; simply because even the most necessary changes always appear from a despotic and obscurantist point of view to involve a confession fatal to the infallibility which has to be maintained at all costs. How long then ought we to halt between two opinions? Are not *facts* to count for something in ridding us of a double, or a doubtful, mind? Should we not listen to the plain verdict of events upon the actual world-influence exercised by the intransigent Churches whose one cry is for abject surrender and submission, as compared with the vigorous growth of those which have refused to exclude from the start the essential idea of unity?

Take first the broad facts of relative ascendancy during the two centuries for which statistics are available—from 1700 to 1900. It appears that at the opening of this period the population

under Christian rule was 155 millions, and at its close 890 millions. But the significant thing is the *relative* growth as it affects the component parts of the whole mass. In 1700 the number of Greek Church adherents stood, in millions, at 33 ; in 1900 the figure had grown to 128. Meanwhile, the Roman obedience, claiming at the beginning of the period 90 millions, grew to 242. But the peoples attached to the Reformed Faith, starting in 1700 lower than the smaller of the two historic Churches, at 32 millions, attained during the same interval of time no less than 520.[1]

Thus the actual increase in favour of that part of Christendom influenced by the Reformation, as compared with that of Greek and Latin Christianity taken together, is as 488 to 247 millions, during the same period of two hundred years. The separate *ratios* of increase seem even more striking. The Greek Church peoples increased in the period not quite four times (33–128) ; the Romans not quite three times (90–242) ; those of the Reformed Faith increased more than sixteenfold (32–520).

The results in the case of the Latin Church published by Mr. McCabe, who has made an elaborate study of its condition in various countries,

[1] See Tables given in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 10th Edn., Vol. xxvii., pp. 54, 55.

are still more startling. Writing in 1909,[1] he computes the total numerical strength of Roman Catholics at 189 millions, and registers a total loss to that Communion during the previous seventy years of no less than 80 millions, of which 17½ are assigned to the United States of America, England, Canada and Australia. The common idea that the Papacy has largely made up its notorious Continental losses by trans-oceanic gains appears to be mistaken; as, during this comparatively short and recent period of seventy years, the falling off in the United States alone amounts to fourteen millions. In Britain of course Roman organisation is very much in evidence, as our shores are famous for hospitality to all who find less liberty elsewhere. But although proselytism is vigorous and conversions studiously advertised, evidence of the conversion of the country to an acceptance of Papal claims is no more perceptible than conceivable. The capture of Newman in the earlier part of the nineteenth century proved an immense asset at the time. But theological study has gone far since the date of the *Apologia*, and the progress of international scholarship has practically destroyed the possibility of the Reunion of Christendom ever being compassed by the

[1] See *The Decay of the Church of Rome*, p. 195 and pp. preceding (Methuen), 1909. The reader is also referred to Rev. Percy Dearmer's *Reunion and Rome*. 2nd Edn., 1911 (Mowbray), especially chh. iii. and iv.

simple expedient of universal submission to the Pope. As plain matter of fact, the Roman Church since Newman joined it has lost nearly a third of her spiritual dominion; and far larger numbers forsook the Papacy in the nineteenth century than in the sixteenth.

Parallel with this contrast between the continual retrogression of these venerable Churches and the constant advance among those touched with the spirit of the Reformation, runs another no less striking between the attitude of these two great divisions of Christendom towards the problem of Reunion. In the wide gulf of difference existing on the question of unity between the ancient Churches of East and West and almost every other Christian body in existence, it seems impossible to avoid seeing the direction indicated by actual facts for Anglican effort to take. On the one hand, an ever extending sense of fellowship and desire for mutual cooperation mark all reformed Churches; while unreformed Christendom, although dwindling in influence and divided against itself, is unwilling to move a step. Why, in such circumstances, spend labour where it is certain to be wasted; when elsewhere there is promise of good fruit? Neither dignity, wisdom, nor charity is to be served by knocking at the barred doors of Churches which make an idol of their isolation, while they exert less and less influence on the life and progress of the world.

This contention is further supported by the moving thought that the primary mission of the Anglican Communion is plainly to the Anglo-Saxon race, whose spiritual aspirations and activities it exists to quicken and to guide. In this regard we cannot overlook our close relations with the American Episcopal Church—an instance of existing religious unity completely unaffected by political separation. Nor is it irrelevant to note that, although as late as 1800 the English tongue among European languages had the position of least influence in the world, by 1890 it had surpassed the rest fourfold. All these indications point one way. They assign the palm for vigorous life and growth—affecting population, linguistic prevalence, and religious progress alike—to the freedom-loving part of Christendom; and they crown its component Churches with an immediate vocation and an urgent responsibility. For it is they who are supremely called to the enormous enterprise of securing for Christ's Religion in the world that vital influence and real supremacy which it now so manifestly lacks.

Even the best accredited Churches cannot look for exemption from the inviolable law which makes adaptability to environment a necessity of life. The facts of the case and the signs of the time all join with the voice of vocation and of opportunity to urge the undertaking on which

this National Church of ours should fix her eyes and prepare to expend her strength. The *Ecclesia Anglicana* is an integral part of Christendom with gifts and marks of her own. She can only fulfil her destiny in the degree in which she exercises with boldness and prudence that God-given genius for Freedom and Comprehension which the Anglo-Saxon peoples most value and best understand. Here for the English Church lies her own innate and original strength; and it indicates the appointed and appropriate line of her action. To affect at this critical time the paltry rôle of an imitated arrogance, to pursue an alien policy of aloofness or exclusion, were simply to ignore the day of visitation and make light of a great calling. Let our Anglican rulers rather follow fearlessly that true instinct of *Magnanimity*, used by the Statesmen of Britain with such unifying power that the scattered units of an immense Colonial Empire now breathe and act together as one man.

The truth must be faced that nothing ever emerges from the Vatican headquarters, or from those of Eastern Orthodoxy, which betrays any genuine desire for Reunion. If from time to time an individual voice is heard, the official extinguisher is promptly applied. Yet it remains eternally true that they most truly reverence the past who show themselves inspired by its living

lessons, not they whose action is paralysed by its dead issues. They, too, most honour the revelation brought to wandering humanity by Christ, who give free course to the prompting of His Spirit for the widest possible application of "the Faith once delivered to the saints" to the crying needs of our unsaintly world. We all profess to believe that in the future the great multitude whom no man can number will be gathered into the single spiritual unity of a better world. But if in the white radiance of the One Throne our ignorant anathemas must dissolve in tears of repentance and regret; if hereafter no shrunken ideal will satisfy even the most ecclesiastical mind, nor any "narrow platform of love"[1] exhaust its eloquence; why do we wait for the darkness of our earthly minds to vanish in the realised presence of God, when most of it might yield at once to the generous exercise of a reasonable piety?

Since, by pursuing uniformity on obscurantist lines, only further havoc can accrue to the Church of Christ, surely "that pure and reformed part of it" established in these realms should be foremost in seeking Unity on the Catholic principles avowed in her own formularies and attested by the doctrine and practice of her great divines. Those excellent people who so dread widening

[1] The burden of a sermon preached at All Saints, Margaret Street, by the Bishop of Zanzibar in 1913. Compare St. Paul, i. Cor., xiii.

the existing breach between the Anglican position and the historic Communions of East and West that they wish to keep us tied and bound to immobility make an immense mistake. For this is pre-eminently a case to which the great Yogi saying strictly applies: "There is nothing to fear but Fear." However true it be that no Reunion is worth working for that fails to aim at the ultimate Unity of the whole Family of Christ; yet that final goal can only be reached after long and passionate patience, by combining in the future, as Time and Truth open the way, the partial results at present possible. As dignitaries of the Greek and Latin Churches have often pointed out,[1] the consolidation of Reformed Christianity would aid rather than delay its eventual restoration to fellowship with the rest of Christendom.

The contrary opinion, though firmly held in certain circles, seems a particularly injurious error.

[1] *E.g.*, the Very Rev. A. A. Hotovitzky, a Dean of the Russian Orthodox Church, addressing members of the American Episcopal Church in New York, in May, 1913, said: "As one of a Church outside the Anglican or Protestant Churches, I certainly feel that the first step at this moment towards realising the purposes of the *Conference on Faith and Order* is really to embrace your Protestant Churches all together. . . . You may not be able at once to get into full sympathy; but all could be brought into such relations that every Christian can pray in comfort with his brother. If you cannot do *that*, how can you expect to reconcile such differences as exist with the Eastern Orthodox Church or the Roman Catholic Church? How can they be approached, or very well answer to your call?"

It probably gains fallacious support from the difficulty some influential Anglicans find in grasping the fact that, from the point of view of Greek and Latin orthodoxy, *all* Churches admitting Reformation principles are already classed together. If therefore instead of presenting the appearance of a mere cluster of rival camps these Churches wielded the strength of a great federalised Christian Power, the increase in effective influence reached by the coalition would prove a striking lesson in the practical value of unity, and tend not to hinder but rather to provoke further "perfecting into one" in other areas of estrangement.

If only the venerable rule—*In necessariis Unitas, in dubiis Libertas, in omnibus Caritas*—were really reverenced, *and fearlessly applied*, all would naturally follow. But Churches will never agree upon what *is* necessary, until they include this very process of decision among the "all things" over which Charity is sovereign. Love must stand by Truth's side in formulating this judgment. All turns upon the resolution not to overload the short list of the apostolically "necessary" with an impossible mass of more than "doubtful" accretions. The next chapter will be given to the detailed discussion of this *crux* as it affects the relations of Anglicanism and Nonconformity. Meanwhile there are some general considerations which should help to create the kind of

atmosphere in which alone such problems can be solved.

For example, the record of past dealings with bodies of Christian people now separated from our National Church contains so many regrettable pages, that our Anglican Fathers of to-day must assuredly be eager to assert afresh the Church's true character as a *comprehending* rather than an excluding Body. Let a single instance furnish the moral of many. When the Methodists took the separatist road—to which their famous leader, the great evangelical churchman, John Wesley, was so opposed—the main issue at stake was liberty for lay-preaching. At the moment, it was strangely deemed a "necessary thing" for the Church of England to discountenance the lay preacher. But now this identical agency has become an integral part of Anglican Church machinery, and the only present hesitation concerns the liberty of women to preach as well as men. Sometimes a growing change in view is noticeable on the other side. For instance, more than one Nonconformist body seems now to take a much altered view in regard to the utility of a kind of supervision of the ministry indistinguishable from that exercised by Bishops, at least in so far as the function of control and oversight is concerned. The earlier prejudice against any set form of liturgical worship is likewise passing

away, while the Church of England at the same time is aiming at greater elasticity in this regard. Such approximations in practice are always tending to increase; as is to be expected in the life of all vigorous organisms where development is directed to similar ends.

In order to cope successfully either with Religion's common hereditary foe—crass indifference—or with that rampant activity of evil by which indifference is occasionally superseded, the whole body of Christ has dire need of every reserve of strength now held up or discounted for want of the combining power of unity. Half, at the very least, of the work at present being done in Christ's Name in our land is done by those who "follow not with us." Now when, in 1896, the futile attempt was made to obtain Papal recognition of Anglican Orders, we heard much about the witness of the Spirit accrediting the results of our ministry. Well and good: but then we certainly cannot refuse to acknowledge the force of the same argument in so far as it tends to regularise the ministry of carefully organised Free Churches.

The truth is that no Anglican can review *æquo animo* the rise and growth of Nonconformity, and acquit his own Church of all share in that sort of irrational inflexibility which he justly resents in the attitude of Rome. No Church,

no community of Christians anywhere, is clear of blame for the present state of things; and candour alone compels us to exclude all bitterness in contemplating "the dissidence of dissent." The time has come for the most careful and the most charitable sifting of the conditions of that fuller cooperation which always tends to unify; so that nothing is insisted upon save really necessary things—necessary not merely from beloved association and venerable usage, but on unassailable grounds of fundamental Christian principle. The need of the world to-day calls to us no less loudly than did St. Paul of old: "If there be any fellowship of the Spirit, let the peace of Christ stand umpire" in the process of eliminating Christian differences. We know well the kind of things Christ valued most. We can be certain of some at least of the principles of His arbitrament. We recall how He dealt with that most strictly guarded institution of His people's ancient Church—the divinely ordained Sabbath—directly it came into collision with the supreme claim of human need. We remember that He met anxiety about worship on this mountain or on that, by deliberately substituting for the separatist idea the greater one of spiritual inclusion. Not here nor there, but everywhere, "the Father seeketh the true worshippers" who worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Of course the fissiparous tendency of the schismatic spirit is undeniable. Hence arise those endless petty severances, those interminable sub-divisions, which make the attitude of perpetual protest as baneful as that of exclusion. They have in fact the same effect, and are equally uncomely. Ultra-protestantism is reduced at last to an absurdity. In the expressive American of Bishop C. P. Anderson, "The Church of Christ is so overshadowed by churches that not even a Postmaster could find it." The hostility of many Anglicans towards Dissent is doubtless fed by a sense of the gross indignity thus put upon the Christian Faith; it is therefore the more important for such Churchmen to realise how deeply evil all this useless multiplication of Christian societies *is already felt to be by Nonconformists themselves;* and what earnest endeavours are afoot to reduce it. The most flagrant examples of extreme separatism are now rapidly decaying. In obedience to the sure operation of social law, they tend more and more to become absorbed in the larger and more stable organisations. The partial Federation of Free Churches effected in 1896 is certain, in time, through its National Council, to develop into a full Federation, which, in turn, will gradually compass the practical unification of British Nonconformity. The scheme brought forward in March, 1910, by the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, and warmly

approved from the first, boldly outlined nothing less than a United Free Church in England. After remaining in abeyance for five years, a Conference of delegates from every Free Church in the country met in September, 1915, and cleared the ground for its realisation. A further stage was reached in March, 1916, when such solid progress was made, by a happy combination of practical insight and spiritual power, that the great gathering at Bradford is likely to become historic in Nonconformist annals. Further advance was registered in July, and the Oxford Congress fixed for this September will probably complete the outline of a great example of unification on federal lines.

This forward step will no doubt gradually put an end to such anomalies as four or five Free Church "causes" (as I believe they are termed) leading a precarious life in some country districts, where a consolidation of enthusiasm might create a vigorous agency without any real sacrifice of principle. To the outsider it has always appeared a mystery why examples of this kind have continued in spite of the presence of sufficient unity of spirit to enable Nonconformists generally to exchange pulpits, and work together in various enterprises, to a degree quite unusual among different parties within the Church of England. The large scheme now approaching what promises to be at least a successful launch has probably

gained by the caution wisely observed in pressing it to the present stage. If there has been no haste, there has been no real waste of time; for nearly every group has been busily using the delay to co-ordinate separate effort. A strong movement, for example, has developed for the union of the much divided forces of Methodism. Baptists and Congregationalists have markedly drawn together. In Canada proposals have been formulated for organic union between the Presbyterian and the Methodist and Congregational Churches. Across the Tweed two of the great Presbyterian dissidences were ended by amalgamation in 1900; and now this United Free Church is in a fair way—to judge by the high tone of the utterances on both sides—to become one with the Established Church of Scotland.

Thus everywhere in Protestant Christendom there appear plain signs of an actively unifying spirit diligently at work, and here and there achieving notable results which challenge our own zeal. Such efforts have great value; and all who desire the increase of Christian influence in the world will hope and pray for their perfecting. In the writer's view every well considered union, effected with unselfish aim, between Christian bodies separated from us is calculated to bring Nonconformity as a whole nearer the National Church; just as, on the larger scale, a combination

or even federation of all Reformed Churches would facilitate, and certainly not obstruct, the Reunion of the whole of Christendom. Signs are already apparent that Bishop Westcott's forecast of the beginnings of movement from the Anglican side is likely to prove true. His insight and acumen showed him, years ago, that the definite consideration of the *necessity* for an advance towards Christian Unity would be forced upon our Communion by pressure from the circumference rather than from the centre of its life. A short time ago Australia seemed likely to be the scene of some practical action between the Anglican and Presbyterian bodies, under the auspices of the Archbishop of Melbourne. Efforts of the same kind in Canada also came within measurable distance of realisation. A still wider movement has been initiated by the Episcopal Church in America, with which we are in full communion. It created a "Joint Commission for a World Conference on Faith and Order," which met in London shortly before the war, and again since. Both in the comprehensiveness of its constitution, and in the scope and direction of its aims, the work of this Commission is full of promise, and will be anxiously watched by all who long for the rolling away of the great stone of Disunion from the grave of the Christian spirit.

It is, however, in the outposts of the Mission

Field that the absence of Christian unity is most severely felt, and the exigencies of the case most acutely realised. That greater cooperation has become a necessity is the growing conviction in every quarter. We see it in the proceedings of the "Indian National Conference of Missionaries" held at Calcutta in December, 1912; in which Anglicans and Nonconformists of every shade concerted together with certain highly educated native Christians to frame the basis of a workable *entente*. After the Calcutta Conference came the "China National Conference," held at Shanghai in March, 1913. Organised on the same lines, with the same object in view, it struck the same identical note, namely, the *necessity* for a more united presentment of Christianity if the Faith is to prevail.

Still more recently, this witness from India and China found voice and action in Africa also. At an obscure place, destined however to surprising fame, there was held a Missionary Conference like the others, but with some special features of its own. In view of "the ultimate union of native Christians into one Native Church," those assembled sought means to avert future dissensions certain to arise unless the various Christian workers, composing minor differences, agreed to cooperate for the one supreme end. These pioneers of the Faith were moved with a burning desire to approach

their immense task unweighted by the armour of antique controversies meaningless to the African mind, and unweakened by the isolation imposed by sectarian severances.

Accordingly (1) they drew up a "Proposed Scheme of Federation" to be submitted for the sanction of the Church authorities under which they severally acted. It was a course at once loyal, reasonable, desirable, and eminently Christian. As two Anglican Bishops were concerned in framing the proposal we are not surprised to note that its terms mainly follow the well-known lines of the Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888. In view of much misrepresentation, it may be well to reassert, with Dr. A. C. Headlam, that the Kikuyu resolutions stood for "the beginning of an attempt to build up a Church in East Africa on those Catholic principles which the whole Church of England accepts." On the other hand, the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda, though they realised how far their Federation scheme fell short of organic Union, scarcely seem to have appreciated the full difference between federating and merely cooperating. It is, however, plain that, if and when the Anglican Communion is led to adopt the Federal principle in associated work with other Churches, this highly desirable and clearly Christian step ought to be initiated by the Central Authority as a principle of general

application, and not be introduced as a sectional Use, as though it were on a par with some diocesan practice amenable to the sanction of an individual Bishop. As the organised life of the whole Anglican Communion would be affected by the new departure, obviously the whole Body should be called upon to authorise it.[1]

(2) The second special feature in this case was that these Christian missionaries of various Reformed Communions, after considering together how best to carry on their work in unity of spirit, proceeded to cement the bond of peace, and manifest their sense of fellowship in Christ, by uniting together in a celebration of their Lord's great Sacrament of Love. They were evidently penetrated by the same instinct for Unity in Christ which moved General Gordon to receive the sacred elements from Greek, Roman, or Anglican, and probably also—like the great Queen he served—from Presbyterian hands as well. It is scarcely credible that so simple an act of Christian fellowship should, in the twentieth century, have sufficed to fill secular as well as "religious" newspapers with columns of exacerbated controversy during whole months. Yet such was the pre-war world! The hottest fire was not directed

[1] The eminently sane pronouncement made last year by the Archbishop of Canterbury regards the subject as peculiarly suitable for debate and decision by the next Lambeth Conference, due in the summer of 1918. See *Kikuyu*, p. 23 (Macmillan), 1915.

against the Nonconformists who for the nonce laid aside their nonconformity, but against the Anglican Bishops who countenanced their doing so. To those not possessed of a mediæval mind it must always seem singular that the highest possible estimate of episcopal gifts, graces, and authority should disallow, even in circumstances admittedly exceptional, the appointing and dispensing power of an Ordinary on a simple point of Order certainly sanctioned by usage in more than one Cathedral at home within general recollection.

It is, however, alleged that for Episcopalians to join in Communion with ministers of non-episcopal Churches is so inconsistent with the divine right and catholic rule of episcopacy as to amount to a heretical act. Thus this concrete instance may serve to introduce us to the principal obstacle, with its inevitable aura of hostile feeling, which at present blocks the advance of Christian Unity between episcopally governed Churches and others of the Reformed Faith which do not yet regard the historic Episcopate as the best form of Church polity. The point of course is crucial; because even supposing the whole of Nonconformity to have compassed its own unification, and to emerge at length as a "United Free Church," this bone of contention would still remain to hamper its relations with Churches under episcopal

rule. Whether or not this matter is amenable to fresh light and a new perspective, altering its aspect from each of the opposing points of view, we must go on to consider; for nothing stands more directly in the way of the movement towards that larger union and concord whither the living Spirit of Brotherhood is urging all mankind.

CHAPTER VI

OBSTACLES

Progress towards Unity in the Church of Christ was said, before the war, to depend on the creation of "an atmosphere favourable to Reunion." Surely the terrible lesson of current events on the fruits of division in the world cannot be lost upon the Church. If nations can join in defence of Civilisation it would be strange if Churches cannot come together in defence of Christianity. The day is past for "good Churchmanship" to put party before Church, or ecclesiastical organisation before the Faith and Principles of Christ. The paramount need is a new readiness to sink minor differences in order to make the Necessary effective by putting the force of Unity behind it. How can Churches venture less for the growth and influence of the Kingdom of God than Nations are doing to preserve the Kingdom of Man and its elemental truths of Justice, Freedom and Right? The combination of Allied strength has not required

uniformity, either in political dogmatics, or in their governmental expression. Organic differences in national polity have not prevented a really efficacious unity of spirit in the bond of war: and the unity of spirit in the bond of peace, on which the victories of the Church of Christ depend, must come in like manner, by the cultivation of spiritual fellowship unimpeded by domestic differences in ecclesiastical polity.

The grand Alliance of all outer Europe against the fundamental evil of Power divorced from Right is essentially a fellowship of the *spirit*. To give free course to that spirit is to create the atmosphere favourable to Reunion among Churches. There is no other way. No distant goal of organic union, no nearer and more feasible project of federal unity, will ever be achieved between the Anglican Church and other Communions whether Catholic or Reformed—nor can even the wholehearted cooperation that most counts in the war with evil become vigorous and sustained—except in so far as these separated bodies accept the fact that Fellowship in the Spirit is the most vital thing in Christianity. Seeing it was ever so regarded by the Apostles and Prophets on whom the Church was founded, and by those saints of every age and place who manifested most "the mind of Christ," this should surely be a recoverable truth.

What then are the current ideas most hostile

to the growth of this vital element of Christian life—spiritual fellowship—between members of the Anglican Communion and the other Churches of the Reformation which, even divided as they are, exercise between them the chief Christian influence among the most progressive peoples of the world ?

By common consent these two—one affecting a matter of internal discipline, the other a question of catholic order—both fostering the spirit of exclusion and opposing that of fellowship.

I. The idea that Anglican discipline requires the banning of adult Christians, quite apart from "notorious evil-livers," from participation in the Eucharist except they be confirmed.

II. The idea that Episcopacy was in such manner instituted at the first as to preclude Churches without Bishops in one of the recognised successions from being accounted Churches at all.

Obviously these opinions occupy totally different planes of importance, although they are not, as recent happenings have shown, entirely unconnected. The domestic disciplinary rules of one part of Christ's Church do not raise any of the much more difficult questions connected with the Catholic Order of Christendom, and for that reason should be much more easily disposed of. We turn to this simpler subject first.

I. The contention is that no adult Christian,

however otherwise well accredited, ought to be admitted to Holy Communion unless episcopal hands have been laid upon his head in the primitive rite of Confirmation. This is our custom within the Church of England; and it is no doubt a good and convenient rule; but it is certainly not a catholic principle. In the Roman Church, where there is no "laying on of hands," the outward sign is not observed; and in the Orthodox Church the custom is for Priests to confirm, not Bishops. The truth is that no part of Christendom follows quite so closely as the Anglican the primitive record of Apostolic usage in the conduct of Confirmation. The next nearest is probably the Presbyterian, where the spiritual essence of the rite as practised by the Church of England is carefully preserved (1) in a renewal by the candidates of their Baptismal vow, and (2) in solemn prayer for the gifts of the Spirit. The Apostolic form, by reverent imposition of hands, is likewise strictly followed.

Now in the year 1911, the Anglican *Representative Council*, whose composition and dogmatic leanings are well known, urged upon all their fellow Churchmen, by a unanimous vote, the duty of doing all they possibly could for "the increase of brotherly love" between the National Church and "Nonconforming Churches"; —the word "Churches" being expressly chosen

on the motion of Lord Halifax. But is not the very meaning of the existence of the Church of Christ obscured, and its primary purpose frustrated, if baptized Christian folk are not held, if they so desire, in the fellowship of corporate life by partaking together of the One Bread? As Dr. Hort insisted years ago—"The members which make up the one *Ecclesia* are not communities but individual men. In other words, I am a member of the Catholic Church not because I am a member of the Church of England, but because I became a member of Christ in Baptism, and have striven to be faithful to Him." In this sense, too, our Liturgy, in the prayer for all conditions of men, speaks of all who "profess and call themselves Christians" (assuming their baptism) as constituting the Catholic Church, and in the Communion Office defines "the mystical Body of Christ" as "the blessed company of all faithful people." The more formal statement of Article XIX declares: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

Whatever be the disciplinary rule of this or that Church in respect of admission to first Communion, for one Church to exclude from participa-

tion in this Sacrament adult and duly accredited members of other Christian Churches, who have conformed to the rule prevailing in their own body, is a measure impossible to reconcile with any principle of Christ, and one directly calculated to promote and prolong the disunion He abhorred. No such exclusion is practised in the Episcopal Church of America; and it is no doubt largely owing to this fact that the relations which obtain in the United States between Episcopalian and other Christian bodies are marked by so much more friendliness than here at home. Moreover, in our own country, the repeated occasions both known and unknown on which Christians not episcopally confirmed have been welcomed to the Altars of our Cathedrals and Churches, clearly show that the time has come for catholic principle to prevail over the letter-worship of a comparatively modern disciplinary maxim.

Again; the very rubric of 1662, which is relied upon to justify this fencing of the Lord's Table from nonconforming but baptized members of Christ, is read by high Anglican authorities as having no reference to such people, but only to the Church's own children being come to years of discretion. This was a constant ruling of Archbishop Tait, and one with which both his successors, Drs. Benson and Temple, agreed; while the verdict of that clear-headed and erudite

historian, Bishop Creighton, inclined the same way.[1] But since even Archiepiscopal judgments of a liberal tendency are suspect to the rigid rubrician, we may look at the words from another angle. Suppose that, after the convulsion of the Civil War which had thrown Church and Crown into the melting-pot, the revisers of 1662 had been moved to add to the service of Adult Baptism, as a simple measure of protection, a rule restrictive in the sense which these high authorities disclaim —what then? Are two centuries and a half of altered mutual relations not enough to cancel such restriction? We are not now living in 1662, but in 1916, and the utterly changed conditions now existing should certainly affect the application, whatever be the preferred interpretation, of an admittedly doubtful rule. *In dubiis Libertas, in omnibus Caritas.*

If, however, it be still insisted that episcopal prestige is indirectly liable to prejudice by any relaxation, we may call to mind that, in theory, a Bishop's responsibility extends to all baptized persons within the area of his rule; and as from of old his high office has pre-eminently stood for Unity, his chief concern must naturally be to preserve every member of his flock in the completest fellowship with Christ. One hesitates to picture the possibility of a Father in God declining

[1] See *Life and Letters*, vol. ii., p. 64.

to apply to this great Sacrament of Life and Love those apostolic words originally spoken in reference to the Laver of Regeneration—"Who can forbid these that have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Altogether, it seems very doubtfully Christlike to withdraw this case from the spell of those still more commanding words, more than once recorded, and with different implications, but always spoken from one motive and with one intent, namely, to thwart the antichristian spirit of exclusion—"Forbid them not."

II. The second contention to be examined is much more serious and far-reaching. To allow it is not only to bar spiritual fellowship but to cripple with the shadow of discourtesy that freedom of conference and concerted action by which the prospects of eventual unity are materially aided. The first condition for just judgment in this thing is perfect clearness as to what is and what is not in dispute. Of the intrinsic value of episcopacy as a method of Church government ages of experience leave little doubt; in its practical value non-episcopal bodies are more and more tending to believe; and of its historic witness to the successional principle the Anglican Communion is thoroughly persuaded. None of these things is in dispute; though they are constantly confused with the point at issue. That point is simply this: whether the power of trans-

mitting a necessary grace of orders from the twelve Apostles is solely confined to those members of the presbyteral Order who are consecrated Bishops. In other words—whether this ancient and excellent episcopal form of Church polity so constitutes the vital essence of every true part of the Church of Christ that no Church without Bishops can be accounted a Church at all.

Now since the Reformation, Anglican adherents have always been considered free to answer this proposition in the negative, without the least reflection being cast on their fidelity. But now, for some fifty years—as part of the later development of the Tractarian movement—an aggressive section of the Anglo-catholic party has set itself to discountenance, and if possible to rule out, any reply save an unqualified affirmative. Thus it has come to pass that parish magazine theology is found to assert with papal assurance: "A Bishop is necessary to the existence of a Church": and promptly meets the doubt: "But surely you would not unchurch Dissenters?" with the cool rejoinder: "Certainly not. You cannot unchurch where no Church exists." This view is simply the logical result of a mechanical interpretation of the historic fact of Apostolical Succession. It adds to the fact a theory; turns the theory into a doctrine; and proceeds to impose the doctrine as if the whole weight of the Anglican

communion were behind the imposition. By virtue of this process the possession of Bishops becomes the very *esse*, as distinguished from the *bene esse*, of a Church ; since the validity of its ministry hangs upon the episcopal channel through which alone, *ex hypothesi*, ministerial grace is mediated.

Until recently, " ordinary Anglicans " (as they are contemptuously called by the party of zeal without discretion) regarded this minority view, which makes episcopacy essential to a Church's existence, as an extravagant but harmless notion merely outrunning the normal Anglican belief in Bishops as weighty witness to the Church's historicity, and as possessors of a unique capacity for its service. Now, however, these rival views have come into sharp collision, owing to a concerted attempt on the part of the exclusive school to impose its theory as the only legitimate expression of the corporate mind of the Anglican communion. We are all to become subject to a new *articulus stantis ecclesiæ ;* and the old wisdom genuinely characteristic of our Church—" to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing, and of too much easiness in admitting, variation "—is scouted as a mere " white cliffs of Dover religion," presumably because it lacks the Vatican hall-mark, without which, for the Romaniser, no way however wise can be " catholic."

Now the cause of Unity is always and everywhere the cause of Truth; though on a short view it may not so appear. We greatly need a candid declaration put forth by authority, stating the true grounds on which our Church has undeniably placed the Historic Episcopate as one of the four corner-stones of her polity. Such a deliverance would clear the air, and cut short the career of baneful and baseless assertions which redound to the Church's discredit because irresponsibly uttered in her name.

Much in the interpretation of this time has proved doubtful and obscure; but there is one thing that he who runs may read. Not the world only, but the Church, has come to the parting of the ways. We have seen Civilisation without Christ return to barbarism; and we have to confess that Christendom without the Unity which is the sacrament of Christ's Spirit has been impotent to avert the lapse. Now with this failure of the Organisations that stand for Christianity in the eyes of the world, Christianity itself inevitably becomes discredited. If the original Faith is to come to its own after the tempest, its adherents of every kind must be on the watch for signs of the Divine purpose behind all this awful sifting, and must be quick to understand that the winnowing of nations and Churches is not for nothing; —that the "shaking" takes place in order that

some things may pass, and only that which cannot be shaken may remain.

Can any doubt into which of these two categories God would have us place the rivalries, jealousies, and estrangements, even between Churches so fundamentally at one that they all acknowledge the main principles of the Reformed Faith? How much longer must these separated bodies of believers in the Christianity of Christ go on nursing their "unhappy divisions" in sectarian isolation? Could any greater blessing befall the Churches of Britain, at home and beyond the sea, than the gradual evolution of a more truly National Church? Disunited as these Churches are, they have already shown themselves capable of enormous influence on the nation's character and ideals; what might they not do with the barriers of ecclesiasticism broken down? Uniformity is no less undesirable than it is impossible; but is it not time to give substance to that hope of reconciliation which burns with a new brilliancy as new conditions are created in the world of thought? As far back as 1888 the Lambeth Conference dwelt on these "condition-crises," carefully described them, and applied the emerging principle of action to Home Reunion.[1] After nearly thirty years, with every historical phenomenon driving us down on the fundamentals of faith,

[1] See *Kikuyu* (Macmillan, 1915), Appendix C, p. 59.

and the admirable unifying efforts of Nonconformity challenging our zeal, surely "circumstances" are never likely to speak in tones of greater urgency than now.

Let the centuries gone by suffice for fruitless lamenting. It is time at least to prepare the way for action by taking the most earnest heed to all that makes for Unity, and consequent vigour and strength. The omnipresent enemy of every Church is utter indifference to "things unseen," under the insistent pressure of "things seen." The real foe cannot be withstood by meticulous care for what is functional, organisational, external. If to so strong a sacramentalist as Father Tyrrell, reared amid all the lore of the most perfectly organised Church on earth, "the idea of Jesus as the Divine, indwelling and saving Spirit" constituted "the very essence of Christianity," this ought to be clear enough to every Christian man to save us all from a temper of mind which leaves us still, heirs though we be of ages of saintly experience, under the cardinal reproach —"Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of."

If only the English Church can find the true spirit to rise to the opportunity which all great times of crisis bring; if only its leaders be given the Vision that indicates the Task; there need be no bartering away of any of the great gifts of

the Anglican position—"its quiet adherence to truth, its abstinence from needless innovation, its backbone of historical continuity;"—and yet God's purpose may be realised. For there is a reason why our place is so distinct from those ancient and moveless institutions in the Christian world whose influence dwindles the more mankind escapes the grip of the dead hand of the past. But if the destined rôle which the not distant future will disclose is not to be rejected, Anglicanism must be cleared on certain moot points by a candid declaration of its position and of the grounds on which it rests. The need of the time is an authoritative and judicial statement founded on the verifiable results of that sound learning which has always been the glory of the English Church. No other basis will suffice if even a great corporate pronouncement is to carry conviction to the general mind. But only men of factious and unreasoning opposition could repudiate a really synthetic judgment formed on the materials now available: e.g. (*a*) relevant ancient testimony in the light of a now practically exhaustive study of Christian Origins; (*b*) the witness of Church documents and of the best accredited Anglican divines; (*c*) a collation of the ascertainable facts affecting the history of the case.

It is a pleasure to picture the conclave assembled to achieve this synthesis. Able men, penetrated

with the living Spirit of Truth ; immune from any bias of partisanship, expediency or prejudice, but rich in the qualities which—as the excellent von Hügel says—"bear upon them the impress of God and of His Christ,"—men powerful in "candour, moral courage, intellectual honesty, chivalrous fairness, disinterested collaboration, endless docility to facts."[1] Only an arbitral decision thus obtained can adequately meet the difficulty arising from the fact that all men's beliefs are largely temperamental. The rival opinions now calling for adjudication are commonly the conclusions natural to opposite types of mind. The umpire required must be prepared with a judgment having weight and influence with both. Intuitionalist and authoritarian alike are no doubt prone to resent the necessity of resort to elaborate processes of critical inquiry. Nevertheless the manifest value of a decision so clearly based on truth as to convince every fair mind must reconcile all honest men to respect the verdict of historical investigation.

Pending the benefit of some such authoritative focussing of available light, Anglican opinion is plainly urged by current events to spare no pains to become conversant with such material for judgment as presents itself to any open-minded student. Were such pains taken more often,

[1] *The Mystical Element in Religion*, vol. i, p. 79.

the experience of the author of *Episcopacy and Unity* would frequently recur. In this book, which dates from 1912, before Kikuyu was heard of, Mr. Wilson tells us that "having accepted, without enquiry, the common opinion as to the claim of episcopacy to be the one and only divinely appointed system, it came as nothing less than a shock to find how rickety was the platform upon which that theory stood." If in the days of St. Paul it was sound advice to "test all things" in order to hold fast the good, to-day the counsel is even more imperative. At any rate no one should let slip the chance of lengthening the cords and thereby strengthening the stakes of Christ's Church, through neglect of the light of knowledge whether old or new.

The confirmed traditionalist is far too prone to see nothing but a menace to ancient landmarks in a candid appeal to historical facts. Yet such appeal is the very safest means of conserving whatever in tradition is worthy of continued life. Except in so far as it is the vehicle of truth, tradition has for this and all future generations only an antiquarian interest. We may account tradition an indispensable preserver; but the wineskin is not the wine. It is fatal to confound the jewel with its casket. Tradition may preserve a diamond, but it often shelters paste with equal care. Its diverse and conflicting nature tends

to disunite. There are centuries behind the aphorism "No Bishop, no Church"; but *ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia* is also a genuine antique. The authority of Truth alone is absolute. Every approximation towards it, every accession of "obedience to truth," is a step towards unity. Whatever is verifiable in "the deposit of Faith" should be shown to the world as a deposit of Truth. Nothing less would seem to be the duty of the Church to religion. When that part and duty are done, the inward and indefeasible authority of the living Spirit of God may be trusted to teach the rest as the spirit of man is able to receive it.

It is the tragedy of the authoritarian—the man who is always building out of some dogmatic system a palace-prison for the living Truth—that the gist and trend of his work are to separate rather than to unify. And the reason seems to be this: while he is engaged on the vain task of creating an impossible uniformity on the basis of selected tradition, Truth herself, by God's universal law of evolutionary change, goes marching on with her victorious spoil of discovery and revelation, informing and inspiring the life and thought of the world. Thus the old uniformity-hunters, by whatsoever name they may be known, are inevitably left behind to indulge their mistaken aim in ever-increasing isolation. The classical instance of this type is the old-world Pharisee. The tendency of Pharisaism, as the

very name implies, is separatist, because it is blind to the necessity of superseding dead values at the demand of living Truth. Our Lord called the prototypes of this school "blind guides," because they held blindly to outworn tradition, and refused to judge new truth on its merits. Possessing the faculties for a true discrimination, the Pharisees and scribes declined to use them. Their criminal shortsightedness doomed the system they represented to decay. The great historic Church they sought to uphold by wrong means presently perished as an institution for ever.

The pursuit of kindred methods to-day is much more hopeless and unwise; as the principles of judgment which Christ upheld have taken far deeper and wider hold upon the conscience of the world. Yet in the public discussion of our present topic in the pre-war age we were constantly treated to assumptions exactly on a par with the excuse cited by Jesus to explain the pharisaic prejudice: "No man, having drunk old wine, desireth new; for he saith, 'the old is better.'" On this principle we were told (albeit quite untruly) that the Church of England "has always been committed to the view that Divine grace runs only for certain in the episcopal channel; and that all other ministries are not irregular only, but invalid." A high ecclesiastic gave us his *ipse dixit* that for one of his colleagues on the

bench to recognise a Church lacking episcopal rule was to "cross the bounds of Catholicity"; and that if an Anglican Bishop may communicate with members of non-episcopalian Churches, "the whole purpose of our life and work is gone"! A like-minded layman at the same time insisted that our National Church should at once authoritatively declare, as her own and only view, the opinion of himself and his friends that episcopacy is necessary to the very *esse* of a Church in the most absolute and exclusive sense. The familiar device of a false dilemma was used to support his argument: "If episcopacy be not thus a necessity, then it is a mere mischievous ornament, which . . . . ought to have been repudiated by the Church of England long ago." Of course no such dilemma exists for any but an ill-balanced mind. Between these horns, on one of which we are invited to impale ourselves, between vital necessity and mere mischievous ornament, there stretches an enormous field revealing the intrinsic value of an institution which, besides being steeped in historical associations of the most venerable and compelling kind, is capable of fulfilling its purpose better than any rival system.

When centuries of experience have fully accredited a holy office, its manifest worth and dignity can only be injured by the damaging support of false logic and fictitious claims. There re-

mains firm enough ground in all conscience on which to base the staunchest adherence to the pastoral office of a Bishop, without resting that allegiance on the quicksand of a magical and imaginary episcopal capacity to validate the Church that consecrates his calling and sustains him in fulfilling its duties.

In some quarters any account of Ministerial authority which does not depend upon a continuous current of power passing solely through an episcopal chain direct from the twelve Apostles is disparaged. It is called a theory of Church development "from below" rather than "from above." But if the terms of this contrast are taken to mean that what comes from below, in the sense "from the membership of the Church," cannot come from above in the sense of divine origin and warranty, an episcopalian may ask with no less reason than a presbyterian: "May the Holy Spirit not use the membership of the Church as His instrument? Is there no real and abiding presence of Christ among His people? Is not this promised Presence something which belongs to the sphere of God; and may it not be the source of an authority which is from above?"[1]

On the other hand, few can deny that the Lutheran and Presbyterian abolition of the episcopate, and of episcopal ordination of presbyters,

[1] Dr. Lindsay's *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 9.

most regrettably accentuated the breach consequent on the Reformation by raising a quite unnecessary barrier between the protestant and ancient Churches. And the very fact that this course constitutes even now one of the most intractable hindrances to Christian unity seems evidence that the serious character of the repudiation was very imperfectly realised by its initiators. It was argued at the time that as in the New Testament the words bishop and presbyter were used interchangeably, and the two grades of the one Order were not at first strongly distinguished, therefore the episcopate might be regarded as an unprimitive, unimportant, and completely human invention. Yet even then many of the reforming theologians held episcopacy to belong to the later apostolic if not to an earlier age; and everyone must allow that the whole history of the Church from the end of the second century, if not from the death of the Apostles, exhibits everywhere a settled episcopate destined to such influence in moulding its course as justifies Harnack's expressive phrase —"the backbone of the Church."

"We cannot," as Dr. Hatch so sanely observes, "without risk of enormous loss, and only in the rarest circumstances, cut the moorings which bind us to the past." Whatever superstitions may have mingled with the prevalent contemporary belief which rested the valid consecration of the

Eucharist and the power to absolve upon episcopal ordination of priests, they should have been left for time and truth to rectify, without proceeding to an act of needless violence to the general sentiment of the Church. In the result, for the sake of another superstitious error—the verbal infallibility of Scripture and its concomitant letter-worship —the received and reasonable principle of continuity was flouted by this slighting of one of its chief guarantees. A link between the reformed Churches and the old historic organisation of Christendom was lost. A bridge whereby fellowship could have been more readily restored was broken down. Far more in fact was involved than could be understood in a period of passionate heat and violent reaction. But now—now when time has brought the facts of the case into truer relation and perspective; when the corrupted form has almost completely shed the last traces of imperial or feudal arrogance—this liberation of the whole subject from prelatical entanglements immensely clears the view of the principle for which Episcopacy stands in the eyes of those who uphold it on rational grounds.

On one side, Nonconformist thought is plainly moving towards a fuller comprehension of the truth underlying the position of those who make much of this form of ordering in the Church. To cite but a single instance out of many; take

these words of an American minister at the International Congregationalist Congress of 1908 :

> "The point of possible reconciliation lies in something greater and richer than either the present Catholic or the present Evangelical position. It is heroic, I know, to contend for an evangelical principle; it may become more heroic to recognise that the divine life and work in the world may need more than that most valuable principle, and to contend for the full inheritance of the saints."

On the other side, episcopalians might well be more careful to found their fidelity on just grounds which do not appear to set indefensible limits to the undefinable power of the Holy Spirit. When the roots of a great institutional usage penetrate to the virgin-soil of Christendom, and its honour rests secure in the veneration of ages, there is the less occasion to mix with magical or mystical conceptions whatever is really essential in that principle of succession which runs through practically every sphere of life. Apart from anything of the nature of a legal fiction, there remains an asset of inherent value and a weight of historic perpetuity which proclaim themselves; and these alone are enough to justify the Anglican insistence which places Episcopacy among its four chief treasures, and ranks its importance immediately next after Holy Scripture, the two Sacraments of the Gospel, and the two Œcumenical Creeds.

The simple and dignified declaration of the

Lambeth Quadrilateral, which firmly assigns this high position to "the Historic Episcopate," is in fact a standing type of the right kind of claim to be made in its defence. Here there appears no trace of those fallacious arguments founded on questionable inferences, or partisan interpretations, which only embitter controversy and weaken a position otherwise impregnable. What, for example, would become of the first pillar of the Quadrilateral, if it were declared to mean that Holy Scripture was verbally inspired?—or of the second, if magic must be read into Holy Baptism, or transubstantiation into Holy Communion? In like manner, it is to undermine and not to reinforce the foundations of a true regard for the Historic Episcopate, if we rest that regard on the selfish, unverifiable, and exclusive theory "that all other ministries are not irregular only, but invalid."[1]

In the Quadrilateral assertion of the historic importance and permanent value of episcopal rule, Anglicanism neither neglects the counsel nor imperils the forecast of one of her most representative and learned Bishops, who said: "Only let the Church that I love keep its unbroken tradition in the one hand, and the open Bible in the other; and it will be, in the long run, a great

[1] It is to be noted that this inversion of the facts has been pointedly corrected by Archbishop Davidson. *Kikuyu*, p. 30.

means in God's hands for reuniting all bodies of Christians into one."[1] Contrariwise, the addition to the text of the Statement of a partisan gloss in catholic disguise would certainly obstruct instead of furthering this aim; for it would add new spikes of highly controvertible opinion to the existing barriers of ecclesiastical defect, and would banish non-episcopal ministries from the ægis of His Word who said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Thus, in the common interest of truth and unity, it is of the first importance to grasp firmly that the difference on which settlement is called for is no question of over-valuation of episcopacy on this side, or of under-valuation on that; but of a total exclusion from any certainty of Divine grace for all other ministerial means. A somewhat similar difference of view is familiar in the diverse ways men construe patriotism. One man cannot love his country without being blind to the existence of any merit outside its borders; while another, no less patriotic, still has eyes for what is good in alien lands. Both are loyal in their preference; but in the one case the preference is sweet and sound; in the other it is soured by exclusiveness. So here, it is not regard for episcopacy as the best form of Church polity, but the *confinement* of grace to the approved channel, which makes men un-

[1] Congress Sermon of Bishop Lightfoot.

church non-episcopal Churches. But, unless "that pure and reformed part of the Catholic Church established in these realms" has changed its nature into a pale and ineffectual embodiment and embattlement of the spirit of Vatican exclusiveness, the Anglican Communion, considered as a corporate entity, cannot be said to have adopted this view. There is small doubt that the overwhelming suffrages of the great mass of silent Churchmen would indignantly declare against it, as an unauthorised opinion impossible to reconcile with the history, scholarship, and sentiment of the English Church. If, however, a danger by no means imaginary is to be averted, it certainly behoves the "ordinary" Churchman, so contemned by adventurous Romans among us, to furnish his mind on the matter with all diligence.

Now it would be fatuous to suppose that even Dean Robinson's high repute for learning would have made him Select Preacher to the whole Anglican Episcopate assembled from all the ends of the earth for the last Lambeth Conference, if he could be regarded as a half-hearted episcopalian. Yet his address contained this reference to the Fourfold Statement: "We can and ought to recognise that where the first three conditions are fulfilled, and where there is an ordered Ministry guarded by the solemn imposition of hands, there our differences are not so much matters of faith

as matters of discipline, and ought, with humility and patience, to be capable of adjustment. A fuller recognition, on the one side, of a charismatic Ministry, which God has plainly owned and blessed; a fuller recognition, on the other, of the permanent value of an episcopacy which has long ceased to be a prelacy; . . . . and what a prospect of reconciliation at no distant future opens out before us!"

Directly you oppose to that voice of sober wisdom, acknowledged erudition and manifest Christian charity, a challenge, for instance, of this sort: "If the grace of Orders, which can alone qualify for the exercise of ministerial acts, has from the first been transmissible only through Bishops, it follows that non-episcopal Churches are mulcted of this grace, and their ministry, therefore, is not irregular only, but invalid,"[1] the essential core of the controversy is laid bare.

The whole question turns upon this idea of *confinement* of Divine grace. To a growing number the very notion is simply inconceivable; the quoted terms of its expression are reminiscent of the famous logician's account of his science as nothing better than a dodge; and the *If* upon which

[1] They are the words of a rather notorious ecclesiastical layman, who—from the strange tone he adopts in addressing his Fathers in God—has been credited with treating the Church of England as though it were his own back garden.

such disuniting consequences hinge must call for the most rigorous scrutiny. No Christian certainly should be disposed offhand to admit an assumption which must tend to stereotype estrangement between equally good men, and to harden the melting edges of division throughout the larger and more progressive part of Christendom. However the grace of Orders be interpreted, it cannot be put higher than the gift of the Holy Ghost. Yet it was of this St. Peter said: "If then God gave unto them the like gift as He did unto us, when we believed on Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?"[1] Here is a logical sequel to an apostolic *If* which docility to facts will assuredly commend to all who sincerely set store by the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

It is recorded in the Acts how even the officialdom of an intolerant and soon to be superseded Church was convinced by seeing *standing among them*[2] the living evidence of the healing power of God, ministered by men they held to be unauthorised. And it seems quite possible that the divine gift of curing spiritual impotence might be more conspicuous among modern possessors of a correct commission were they more inclined to magnify their office after the Petrine manner. When this Rock of the Church summons the priests of

[1] Acts xi, 17. [2] Acts iv, 13, 14.

Christianity to their high task of shepherding the flock of God, his preface is singularly unassuming: *πρεσβυτέρους τοὺς ἐν ὑμῖν παρακαλῶ, ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος.*[1]

Anyhow, to ban godly men—already, *ex hypothesi*, suffering from defect—and deny them spiritual fellowship on merely supposititious grounds, can do nothing to enhance the value of irreproachable ordination. It is one of the last ways to "commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God"; and that, according to apostolic rule, is a primary condition of ministerial influence. Therefore any assumption made in the interest of exclusiveness, and any mechanistic interpretation of the principle of Succession advanced to justify such assumption, demand the most searching inquiry. Nor can the validity of either be firmly established if it conflict with the considered judgment of expert historical investigation.

Now the materials for such a judgment have been accumulating during the last forty years in an unprecedented manner. On the complex subject of Christian Origins the knowledge now available is far more accurate and better marshalled

[1] i Peter v, 1. "The presbyters, therefore, among you, I exhort, who am *your fellow-presbyter*." That is an instance of genuine apostolic tradition, reflecting the purity of its primitive source. When some of the haughtiest of St. Peter's mediæval successors end their letters—*Servus servorum Dei*, we cannot but feel the jar of the counterfeit.

than was the case even one generation ago. Since Döllinger's day the critical and historical labours of such variously minded men as Harnack and Renan, Loisy and Duchesne, as well as of our own scholars—Lightfoot, Hort and Gwatkin, Gore, Turner and Lake, for example—have reinforced common knowledge with the fruits of special study just when light was most needed in furtherance of Unity. The re-discovery of the *Didache*, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles—a valuable source whose early witness (say A.D. 80–100) seems likely to survive all critical assaults[1]—has drawn fresh attention to several interesting points. To mention but a single one of these—the itinerating ministry of "prophets and teachers" is here to be found taking precedence of the local "bishops and deacons" at the celebration of the Eucharist. This is a flash of primitive light on the pristine value set upon the prophetic element in the Church of the First Century, which is not to be put out, as Dr. Gore seems to suggest, by supposing these selected celebrants to have held "quasi-Apostolic office." The "office" of prophets and teachers is not in doubt; the quasi-Apostolic precedence accorded is the whole point. For it reminds us that it is perfectly open to the living Church of to-day to follow the primitive

[1] See, *e.g.*, an instructive examination of a recent challenge in Sanday's *Primitive Church and Reunion*, pp. 132–136.

suit, and give more regard than is now common to the prophet as distinct from the priest. The prophet has other uses than to "prophesy falsely that the priests may bear rule by their means." He represents and appeals to the type of mind which is unresponsive to institutional mechanism and unimpressed by organisation however complete. This mental type, for which the authority of inward and spiritual experience is stronger than external sanctions, must be reckoned with by every Church awake to the fact that adaptability to environment is a prime condition of survival. To neglect or sacrifice it to the fetish of uniformity is to court separation and division; as Anglicanism is particularly well placed to realise from many of its dealings with Nonconformity, and notably from the case of the Wesleyans. No organisation can be greater than the purpose for which it exists. The Body of Christ exists to manifest and minister His Spirit; combining the joint strength of every diversity of manifestation in one great Unity of effectual witness. We cannot repeat the creed of the Catholic Church without asserting our belief in "the Holy Ghost. . . . Who spake by the prophets." The work of Apostles and Prophets is for ever joined together in the foundation of that living Temple of the Spirit whose corner-stone is the eternal Christ.

Competent judges of the whole field are disposed

to agree that the study of early Christian organisation has about reached high-water mark; and that the time is ripe for a synthesis of results. Dr. Sanday is one of these. He has recently brought together a valuable series of his own papers on the subject, and has greatly assisted the synthesis desired by all lovers of truth by collating the pertinent passages from the evidence of two investigators of the first class. The selection is made (1) from Chapters III and IV in Harnack's *Constitution and Law of the Church*;[1] and (2) from the Chapter on the "Organisation of the Church" contributed by Mr. Cuthbert Turner to the first volume of the *Cambridge Mediæval History*.[2] Professor Sanday predicts for these two pieces—(1) being an acute historical analysis by "the foremost critic of this generation," and (2) giving the luminous picture of the constructive historian—a general verdict of classical rank; and he justifies his forecast in the most telling way by tearing the heart out of this brilliant work and presenting it as a gleaming instance of the unifying power of truth.

It is to be feared that the clergy as a body are not great readers; but if—even without digging

[1] Easily accessible to English readers in a volume of the Crown Theological Library (Williams & Norgate, 1910). The pages of particular relevance in the present matter are 15–18, 58–60, 92–100, 122–129.

[2] Cambridge University Press, 1911.

further into these opened mines of special knowledge —they could be persuaded to read and ponder their concentrated treasure between pages 56 and 112 of *The Primitive Church and Reunion*, they would find themselves transported to a region of extraordinary interest, in company with a guide familiar with every nook to be explored, and prodigal of light and leading for the heart and the mind. Dr. Sanday's presentment of the case should be of special value to those who have been accustomed to think of Episcopacy simply as a dogma—to be taken or left. Here they will find it "translated into the forms of history," presented as a picture rather than a proposition; clothed, so to speak, in flesh and blood. Controversialists on either side who keep a conscience, and who value candour and fairness, cannot fail to appreciate both the letter and the spirit of this discriminating book.

The trend of well-qualified judgment is further shown in the important article on Apostolical Succession recently contributed by Dr. A. C. Headlam to *The Prayer-Book Dictionary*, where the true principles actually involved, namely: (*a*) Orderly Sequence; (*b*) Apostolic Commission; and (*c*) Continuity of Function; are carefully distinguished from the idea, of much later importation but often also included, of (*d*) Transmitting Grace. It is, of course, this last (and highly

questionable) claim which has been diligently used since Tractarian days by certain Anglicans to give a new turn to the historically true idea of a continuous Succession of the Christian Ministry from the Apostles. But we ought to be clear in keeping separate the rule of the Church from any theory of that rule. To look upon Bishops as successors of the Apostles is one thing; to add a mechanical or magical interpretation of what is involved in this succession is quite another. It is one, moreover, not to be justified from the formularies of any part of the Church of Christ, and is therefore to be regarded as an uncatholic imposition. It is a theory against which even Dr. Pusey would rise up in judgment, for he said —" while maintaining that they only are commissioned to administer the Sacraments who have received that commission from those appointed in succession to bestow it, we have never denied that God may make His own sacraments efficacious even when irregularly administered; we should trust it might be so."

Let us, then, sum up with Dr. Headlam: " The idea of Succession, which results from the Church's rule of ordination, is an historical fact, and not a doctrine. It represents an external connection with the first beginnings of Christianity which is of infinite value for the Church. . . . One part of the work of Christian reunion should be to

restore and secure the links of Succession throughout the whole Christian world;[1] but no theory of Orders need compel us to deny Divine grace to those separated from us. . . . Ordination depends upon the authority of the Church, and not the Church upon ordination."

The same drift of scholarly opinion is found running through the recent book called *Foundations*, notably in the contribution by the Tutor of Keble College, whom no one will suspect of bias against Bishops. Mr. Rawlinson writes:

> We are debarred from considering the form of the Ministry as constituted and determined for all time by actual legislation proceeding from our Lord's own lips; its authority must, on any view, be regarded as mediated through the Church by which, under the guidance of the promised Spirit, it was evolved. This is a point of capital importance. For what the Church has determined the Church might conceivably alter. There is no longer any rigid necessity, at any rate in theory, for the future to be determined by the past. . . . Inasmuch as the ideal of a reunited Christendom involves and postulates ultimately some corporate action of Christendom as a whole (which would be theoretically competent even to vary the form of the ministry), it follows that any requirement of a particular form of Church Order as a term of eventual reunion must be justified on its intrinsic merits, and not based merely upon antiquarian precedents. . . . The unbroken reign of episcopal institutions may be undisputed from the third century to the sixteenth, but the non-

[1] Would that our Nonconformist friends would ponder this sentence.—W. L. G.

episcopal communions which date from the Reformation can now point to some three hundred years of vigorous life and Christian experience, and may claim, not without reason, to be regarded as something more than a temporary anomaly. . . . The ministries of the various Protestant denominations may quite legitimately point to the witness of the souls they shepherd, and with Paul exclaim, "The seal of our apostleship are ye in the Lord;" and it were well if the further bandying of epithets like "valid" and "invalid" could be abandoned by consent, as the *damnosa hereditas* of an age of legal metaphors and embittered controversy.[1]

The Archbishop of Canterbury (*Kikuyu*, p. 30) similarly rejects the word "invalid." He describes non-episcopal ordination as "irregular," but "without any attempt to lay down limits as to the operation of the grace of God vouchsafed to those who minister His Gospel to the souls of men." In this recognition of defect on the one hand, and in the refusal, on the other, to go beyond the competence of human judgment in making a specific defectiveness constitute invalidity, our Chief is conspicuously in accord with the clearest and most continuous *Anglican tradition*. The names of Andrewes and Cosin are often cited as men who rescued us from what Keble used to call "low accommodating notions of the Church." But these typical High Churchmen are against Keble in the ineffectual appeal he made from the learned and judicious Hooker

[1] *Foundations*, pp. 385, 386.

to the primitive Fathers in order to establish "the necessity of the apostolical commission to the derivation of sacramental grace, and to our mystical communion with Christ." On the contrary, their attitude justified Hooker's tolerant view of the Scottish and French Reformed Churches, and his opinion that "there may be sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination without a bishop." Cosin advised Mr. Cordel, in a letter written from Paris in 1650, to communicate in the French Reformed Church, and speaks of knowing many instances of a French Presbyterian being admitted to a cure of souls in the Church of England, when "our bishops did not re-ordain him,[1] . . . . as they must have done if his former ordination in France had been void." He even cites a list of learned and eminent men from Jerome to Hooker who maintained that presbyters have the intrinsical power of ordaining *in actu primo*. At Charenton Cosin himself communicated with the Reformed rather than with the Roman Church, and defended his practice.

When in 1610 King James determined to enforce episcopacy on the Scottish Church, it appears that Andrewes, then Bishop of Ely, maintained that the Scottish bishops "must first be ordained presbyters as having received no

[1] Hallam, quoting Strype, says this practice continued down to the civil wars, and the first Bishop who objected was Aylmer. *Constitutional History*, i, 395, note.

ordination from a bishop." What is more surprising is that so vigorous and rigorous a Conformist as Archbishop Bancroft replied "that thereof there was no necessity, seeing that where bishops could not be had, the ordination given by presbyters must be esteemed lawful; otherwise it might be doubted if there were any lawful vocation in most of the Reformed Churches." Whereupon, "this applauded to by the other bishops, Ely acquiesced." Bancroft's ruling in this case bears out Hallam's view (maintained against Cardwell) that Andrewes' famous sermon at Paul's Cross, in 1588, "says nothing about what is commonly meant by the *jure divino* doctrine, the perpetual and indispensable government by bishops."[1] Andrewes' acquiescence with his brother bishops on this point reminds us that even the "higher" view need not, and therefore should not, be pressed to the extreme limits of a logical exclusiveness. Indeed, he himself wrote, eight years after, to Peter du Moulin; "Though our Government be by Divine Right, it follows not, either that there is no salvation or that a Church cannot stand—without it. He must needs be stone-blind that sees not Churches standing without it; he must needs be made of iron that denies them salvation. . . . . This is not to damn anything—to prefer a better thing

[1] *Constitutional History*, vol. i, p. 396, note.

before it; this is not to damn your Church, to *recall it to another form* that all antiquity was better pleased with, i.e. to ours."

In 1661 Archbishop Bramhall of Armagh consecrated twelve bishops for Ireland, which was then mainly Presbyterian. "A typical High Church prelate of the school of Andrewes and Cosin," and author of *Episcopacy by Divine Right Asserted*, he nevertheless in a later work, *Liberty of Prophesying*, favours inter-communion between all Churches holding the Apostles' Creed, quoting Romans x. 9 in support. And he devised a form of conditional reordination for Presbyterians wishing to conform, which was designed, and was so understood at the time, not to invalidate their former Orders.

Bancroft's predecessor in the Chair of Augustine, the famous anti-Puritan, John Whitgift, successively Master of Trinity, Dean of Lincoln, Bishop of Worcester, and, from 1583 to 1604, Archbishop of Canterbury, was probably one of the most powerful instruments in shaping the course of the National Church. Whitgift rigidly upheld religious uniformity. But though his policy produced the bitter attack on bishops and clergy known as the *Marprelate Tracts*, and brought him under the lash of Macaulay's invective as "a narrow, mean, tyrannical priest," nevertheless he did not fail to write: "I deny that the Scriptures

set down any one certain form and kind of government of the Church, to be perpetual for all times, persons and places, without alteration."

Bramhall's predecessor in the Primacy of Ireland (from 1625 to the rebellion of 1641), Archbishop Usher, of rather unhappy chronological fame, enjoyed notwithstanding a great reputation among the scholars of his time; and the words of the man who took up the history of the Western Church from the point where Jewel's Apology left off and continued it from the sixth to beyond the middle of the thirteenth century may be heard with respect on the point under review: "I have ever declared my opinion to be that *episcopus et presbyter gradu tantum differunt, non ordine*, and consequently that in places where bishops cannot be had the ordination of presbyters standeth valid."

Such testimony from a period near to the new birth of the Reformed Anglican Church speaks for itself. If now we turn to *Church Formularies* these too contain many hints of the truth so roundly declared by Archbishop Cranmer, that "Bishops and priests were not two things, but both one office, in the beginning of Christ's Religion." Take, for instance, that curious little piece of evidence which remains imbedded in the Roman Ordinal. Rome classifies its Seven Orders into Three Major and Four Minor. But it is remarkable

that the three Major orders are not defined as Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, but as (1) Bishops and Priests—who form one order; (2) Deacons; and (3) Sub-deacons. The (1) classification forcibly confirms Usher's distinction: *gradu tantum differunt, non ordine.*

Our own Article XXIII is similarly significant. It is there laid down that we ought to judge those "lawfully called and sent" to preach and minister the Sacraments, who are chosen and called to this work by "men who have publick authority, given unto them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard." This cumbrous periphrasis for the single word *Bishops* is inexplicable if the framers of the article had intended so to limit the power of commission as to confine it solely to men of a separate Episcopal order. The plain inference is the same as that from the Roman Ordinal itself, namely, that presbyter and bishop strictly constitute one order only. To the same effect, and carrying the same implication, is the pointedly omitted direction that a Sermon shall accompany the Form of consecrating a Bishop—"declaring how necessary that Order is in the Church of Christ"; although this injunction in each case does precede the Forms for making Deacons, and for ordering Priests.

This kind of testimony to the corporate mind of a Church is only the more valuable from its

incidental character. Such points may appear mere straws; yet if they all float one way they indicate the current; and this will seem to many the way of the primitive stream—present to the minds of Roman theologians no less than to the compilers of the English Prayer-Book. When such indications coincide with the manifest trend of the results of modern research, an argument of great cumulative weight is created for the correctness of the *temperate* interpretation of Anglican insistence upon the Historic Episcopate as part of the fourfold minimum condition of Unity.

When all is said: however Christendom has become entangled with the nemesis of its old mistakes, wherever faith and love are found, there also is Hope. He who believes in Christ, and loves his Christian comrades of all confessions, will hold to the conviction that the future may yet reveal a Church which, as the genuine heir and representative of the Church of the First Days, may have room and power of attraction for all separated bodies—a Church "where liberty will be reconciled with order and discipline; and unity of faith with science and freedom of enquiry." Where such a hope exists, reason and religion join to urge all men of good will not to magnify admitted defect, but to employ every spiritual and intellectual power to reduce the misunderstandings which tend to make disunion permanent. From our Lord's insistence upon

Unity we must all feel that the cleavage and estrangement on account of Episcopacy must appear to Him a far worse evil than the diversity of usage itself. If the estrangement were reduced, the prospect of atoning the divergence would be vastly improved. Either boon, however, requires that each party to the controversy be resolute in doing full justice to the other. And this justice must reveal itself in the light of present conditions, with scales undeflected by prejudice against new historical evidence on the one side, or against the weight of immemorial custom on the other. Above all, let us allow no influence at all to any throbbing of old wounds; no place to rankling memories of ancient war, or of those many *delicta majorum* on which both sides can only look back with common regret.

It is to the moderating, comprehending, attuning and atoning supremacy of Justice and Truth that all problems of Unity—religious, social, international—must ultimately come for solution. No crusade can prosper for our crying *Deus vult*, unless we have taken due pains to "understand what the will of the Lord is." There is a Will of God which can only be done on earth as it is in heaven when Love has grown strong enough to make men more eager for Truth and Unity in the whole Church of Christ than for any sectional triumph of this, that, or another of its parts.

CHAPTER VII

ON PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST

In the third year of a tremendous experience in the brutal reign of blood and iron, it seems to be a marvel that topics such as those reviewed in the last chapter should have engrossed a great consultative body of Anglican Bishops even to within a week of Armageddon. And wonder only grows when we freely admit that these counsellors were simply doing their plain duty, in view of the common estimate by the Churches of the things that matter most.

This being the plane on which the ecclesiastical mind was known to work; when the European tempest broke and real matters of life and death monopolised all thought, one cannot be surprised at the general view that here was a thing too big for wrangling churches to help men to face. As the storm continued to rage against all most worth preserving, with increasing fury and unexampled waste of brilliant life, the feeling also grew that the

problems human and divine raised by this tragic experience were too large a proposition for ecclesiastical dogmatics. Nor was this impression removed by the numerous and conflicting endeavours made in Religion's name to justify the ways of God with men. We had heroic attempts to rescue Divine Love which appeared to be threatened by a misunderstood Omnipotence, and to reconcile a Sultanic aspect of God's sovereignty (supposed to be orthodox) with the power to choose evil inherent in man's nature.

Perhaps the Churches had need to learn that the humble resignation of the prophet—" Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself "—is wiser than expounding which does not explain. Anyhow, the existence among us of many in a true succession from Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar was often painfully revealed. Indeed, before we are through this woe, many a quivering soul is likely to be driven to the tortured patriarch's cry—if not to " forgers of lies," at least to " physicians of no value "—" O that ye would altogether hold your peace ! " For nothing exasperates like the dogmatism of Job's friends—" know thou that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth "—when it is untempered by their reverence—" Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection ? "

Christianity is not a philosophy ; it is the revelation of a spirit capable of creating a certain

sort of mind and life. Jesus neither solved the mystery of evil nor the problem of pain ; but when He called God—"Father," from the torturing Cross, He did more to help men to obey His saving word—"Have faith in God" than if He had endowed us with a knowledge of all mysteries. Christ's power lay in His own absolute trust in everything He taught to others, including the challenge He changed into a promise—"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." The Cross and its sequel are Christ's answer to all human questioning about the love of God. He who was One with the Father, as it has been given to no other, crowned His revealing human life in that precise way because "greater Love hath no man than This." Thus out of an image of dereliction and despair the Crucifix became the symbol of everlasting triumph, because it is the Sign of God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself by a supreme assurance of His nature.

We may think it a mystery why so many thousand years of human evolution have not yet produced a generation effectually convinced that war (for example) is a perfectly remediable crime against humanity, and an inexcusable sin against the God revealed in Christ. But all that concerns *us* in this mystery is only too shamefully clear, namely, that Official Christianity has neither by precept nor example, during many centuries,

sought to impress upon the conscience of mankind these truths which are among the directest offspring of its Founder's principles. Everywhere we seem to be given just enough light to be able to keep our faith, and no more. We see that God did not make a thornless world, peopled only with the good, because He could not, if men were to be men and not automata; since character cannot be created but has to be achieved. We find the human consciousness gradually absorbing somewhat of the very heart of things. Its pulses grow articulate in accents of immemorial solicitude —"In all their affliction He was afflicted," and anon a cloud of witnesses begins to testify out of a live experience how the angel of His Presence saves. Then as the mass of developing humanity, heedless of the heart and mind of the Eternal, still wanders from the indicated orbit of its life and peace, new depths of the Divine compassion are laid bare in "God's unspeakable gift." In this disclosure those thoughts that are higher because more loving than the thoughts of men, seem audible, if we have ears to hear. 'When actually tabernacled in their own flesh men see the beauty of My Spirit that is yearning to redeem their life; when God's Man lives among them in the perfectness of justice, truth, nobility and courage, which even this wayward race has won the power to admire;—then, although My prophets have been

scorned and slain, *surely they will reverence My Son.* Surely, through Him, they will be drawn to covet the Sonship for which they were created, and practise wrong's rejection and the choice of right, until good will is universal on the earth as it is in heaven, and human peace and joy proclaim My kingdom come.'

Well, we know the sequel of the great experiment in Love Incarnate. Some say it has finally and altogether failed. But many more insist that the Society commissioned to transmit the Gospel of the Grace of God has so complicated and obscured it that the failure lies at its door alone. They declare that for more than sixty generations, since Christ came to be the light and life of men, He has amply proved His power to all who have received Him, whether of this Church or that. So they distinguish sharply the patent failure of Christendom, as steward of life and light, from any lack in Christ Himself, or in God's own purpose of love. Not a few, indeed, are actually forsaking the Churches in order to find more room for the Christianity of Christ, and to give it a fairer trial, than they think Christendom in general disposed to allow. Some of these are the salt of the earth. And there is just now urgent need for the orthodox organisations to find the grace to meet such souls, not simply with reproachful horror at an apparent slighting of the Body, but with a real understanding

of that loyalty to the Spirit which may seem to dictate a mistaken step. Perhaps it would be possible for Churchmen to learn something well worth learning from an eager forward-looking attitude, distinctive of true faith, but not always conspicuous among ourselves. We ought to ponder and not resent the warning that "our trouble seems to be that we have lost all sense of the Gospel values, and have substituted for them a whole scheme of erroneous ecclesiastical values. These have become so conventional that we simply take them for granted, and never take time to test them by the standards of the Gospel."[1]

Now it is only these standards of the Gospel, and of Christ in whom the gospel was embodied, which can put us in the way of so seeing the proportions of truth that we grow eager, or even willing, to put first the things stressed most by the Founder of our Faith. For example, it is the certainty that God is Love—the central proposition of all true theology—that matters for mankind far more than any confidence in His omnipotence; for it is love alone that has the power to turn the heart to God. When men cannot rest in the Rabbinic wisdom—"Learn to say I do not know," what happens in real life is just what Mr. Wells makes happen to the hero of his latest novel. The man gives up what he supposes—and with

[1] Rev. C. H. Matthews, in *Faith or Fear?* p. 167.

no little justification—to be the theologian's God of Absolute Omnipotence who looks on, mocking or majestic, at all the waste and horror He could if He liked prevent, and turns to One who, if He be not absolute or all-powerful, has the advantage of being more thinkable—" a finite God who struggles in His great comprehensive way as we struggle in our weak and silly way ; who is with us—closer even than breathing, nearer than hands and feet." Yet if anyone should think that this too rough redressing of the balance in favour of God's Immanence (so widely neglected by theology) is fatal to faith, Mr. Britling is the man to undeceive him. For here is the conclusion of the whole matter for this bereaved and baffled man : " Religion is the first thing and the last, and until a man has found God and been found by God, he begins at no beginning, he works to no end. He may have his friendships, his partial loyalties, his scraps of honour. But all these things fall into place, and life falls into place, only with God. Only with God. God who fights through men against blind Force and Night and Non-Existence ; who is the end ; who is the meaning."

Now if the thousands of thinking people for whom Mr. Britling speaks are to go on feeling themselves excluded from the Churches, the loss of their fellowship is far more disastrous for the Churches than it is for themselves. They may not pronounce

aright the theologian's shibboleth, but they have definitely taken the greatest of all the steps towards knowledge of the doctrine that is divine, because they will to do the will of God ; and for them the kingdom has already come which the Church of Christ exists to proclaim. The trend of an illuminating correspondence, during many weeks of this year, in the *Westminster Gazette*, and the quite exceptional welcome given to the ministry of the late Archdeacon Wilberforce, may be noted among many indications that the common practice of so insisting on the Transcendence as to rule out the Immanence of God is as great a stumbling-block to the thoughtful as that no less unbalanced teaching about the Divinity of Christ which has just been so usefully dealt with by Mr. Harold Anson.[1] This is no time for the dogmatism of ignorance to discourage and depress the multitude of seeking hearts the God of Truth has not made sad. The gift of a deeper comprehension, in the intellectual sense, would often make it easier for certain minds to practise it in that other sense which alone accords with the comprehensiveness of Christ.

One result of that gift would be a truer appreciation of those limits to human understanding which plainly restrict the range of all dogmatic utility. "He perfectly knows God who realises that He

[1] *Faith or Fear?* pp. 87–107.

is incomprehensible and beyond full knowledge." In this tercentenary year the universal prestige of Shakspere may well remind us how needless for catholicity of influence is any assumption of knowledge where knowledge is clearly intended (as part of our life's discipline) to give place to faith. Probably most of the doubts often expressed on the subject of Shakspere's religion arise from his speaking a tongue so alien to that of the omniscient and infallible.

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
>
> "Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul,
> When hot for certainties in this our life."

When thousands far beyond the British Empire are paying homage to this king, whose centuries of reign promise an undying sway, his own folk may reasonably turn to this sovereign mind, ponder its serenity, and perhaps learn from the restraint of its silence as well as from the wisdom of its speech.

In Stratford Church, Shakspere had no doubt often heard the land beyond the tomb mapped out with unfaltering precision; but for the greatest dramatist of all time it still remained that "undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns." And as with the hidden future, so with

the mysterious present, no seer has been more stern in his refusal to affront the majesty of the insoluble with the insult of cheap explanation. This agnosticism of reverence is well brought out by a discerning expounder. "Here upon the earth, evil *is*. Iago actually exists. There is also in the earth a sacred passion of deliverance, a pure redeeming ardour. Cordelia exists. This the poet can say for certain. But how Iago can be; and why Cordelia lies strangled across the breast of Lear; are these the questions you go on to ask? Then it is a part of Shakspere's severity to decline all answers to such questions as these . . . He does not invite you into his little church or his little library brilliantly illuminated by philosophical or theological rushlights. You remain in the darkness. But you remain in the vital air. And the great night is overhead."[1]

Still, we need not admit that to be all. Granted that the air is vital because its vitality has not been sapped by vain work of human air-pump; nevertheless, the silent night is only great for its revealing of the stars. We cannot do without those stars of God with which Napoleon is said to have abashed his atheist friends—those stars which meant so much to the Poet-Hero of the Middle Age that he made them literally the last word of each Book of that immortal Progress which carried human

[1] Edward Dowden: *Shakespere—His Mind and Art*, p. 226.

genius on its loftiest flight into the silences. But though the glory of Dante is one and the glory of Shakspere is another, the Faith toward which these mighty captains moved, in diverse times along contrasting ways, is but one Faith; as surely as he who saw no peace for man save in the will of God is one with him who speaks in Shakspere's testament.

Our English master of the minds of men, at home in every nook and corner of this earth, would have disputed with the earlier Seer, whose restless spirit sought its food in every imaginable world, not one of those fundamental things which for Dante "had the power to turn the heart to God":

> "The being of the world, and my own being,
> The death which He endured that I may live,
> And that which all the faithful hope . . .
> Have drawn me from the sea of love perverse,
> And of the Right have placed me on the shore."

Thus, although in the tempests that explore our fortitude, as in the shipwrecks that expose our blundering, "the stars" in many days may not appear; yet we can, if we will, remember with St. Paul that they are there.

> "For always
> There is a Light above, which visible
> Makes the Creator unto every creature,
> Who only in beholding Him has peace."

Moreover (as both these seers held) that incarnate Light which lighteneth every man born into the world did definitely illumine this earth, lest Love be balked by sin, and mankind miss salvation. Hence, whenever the spirit of man fleeing from intellectual bewilderment finds refuge in God's manifested Love, and lays hold upon its proved redemptive power, Shakspere is there too, at the feet of the Redeemer—

> "... those blessed feet
> Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
> For our advantage to the bitter Cross."

Storms, travail, darkness; the present hell, the future anxiousness; the bitterness of failure, the ashes of victory; all pains of death or life—"in these is the life of the spirit," as men felt and knew even in Hezekiah's day. They can separate us neither from our indwelling God, nor from the fixed persuasion of His Love in Christ; as the magnificent Apostle of the nations, cast down but not in despair, taught all the world by word and deed. We still complain to-day—"It is hidden from me why God willed for our redemption only this one mode." But "the man who had been in hell," yes, deeper than could be understood by the scared townsfolk of Verona, prevails with his reply:

> "Buried remaineth, brother, this decree
> Unto the eyes of every one whose nature
> Is in the flame of Love not yet adult."

Only in this flame, of which the tragedy of Calvary makes cleansing fire, do the full-grown learn to fuse the facts of life with the faithfulness of God. In this school sit the greatest; until Hope, the immortal child of Charity, no longer "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," grows strong and rises, if not into a pæan of apostolic triumph, yet into the confidence of calm conviction—

> "There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
> Would men observingly distil it out."

By degrees the substance of things hoped for takes form in a faith that needeth not to be ashamed; and he, whose splendid harvest was not, like Dante's, sown in suffering and reaped in misery, but who had often borne the pressure of deep waters and known the struggle of a swim for life, faces full the great enigma, and concludes—with the author of *Les Misérables* and all the loyally expectant faithful, "God will be found at the end of all"; for

> "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will."

Now the Way they travel who achieve this quiet strength—this assurance of an infinite "Wisdom that reaches from end to end, strongly and sweetly disposing all things"—is One Way. For

great and small alike it is the way of those who " of all their loves reserve for God the highest." The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. For them His covenant is a reality, for they *know* the Love to which their love responds. They have learnt the lesson of the old Yorkshire mystic [1] of the early fourteenth century—" not by disputation, but by acting and loving will God be known " ; and thus they grow certain of the power behind the longing of the Father, and live in the light of the Son's uplifting. Led by the Spirit they cease to be unwitting servants in Faith's household, and know with the insight of man's true heritage of sonship. And that which no son knoweth, " but the Father only," they can leave with Him in whose will they seek and find their peace.

At each great rise in the evolution of mankind there seems to stand a Cross, where Love Divine is crucified by human sin. Christ made it holy ground for ever. And it was there that Dante, who pierces the very silences of God, and Shakspere, who found them more eloquent unpierced, are seen to meet. There good and evil stand most nakedly revealed ; the two polar elements on which creation turns. There, in the light of this supreme exposure of estranging sin and yearning love they saw—what Christ " for our advantage " died to make us see—that vital *choice of human will* for

[1] Richard Rolle, of Hampole.

God and Right (on which salvation hangs in this or any world) made most secure. On that same holy ground, among a multitude no man can number, a wholly different type of genius joins them. For at this spot, "somewhat ascending, whereon stood a Cross," the greatest Dreamer of all time saw in a figure the nightmare weight of guilty and unintelligible things begin to be loosed from man's back, until it fell off altogether, tumbling at last "into the mouth of the Sepulchre."

A great touch that: the burden only finally disposed of in the *empty* tomb of vindicated Love. True is the instinct of loyalty that utter Goodness is immortal; for it is the very God in man—the eternity set in his heart—from which the instinct springs. The longest crucifixion "has an end" not in the sense of completion only, but of predetermined aim. "To what purpose is this waste?" we needs must often cry from whom the far off interest of tears is hid; yet God Himself is guarantee that no lavishment of love is lost, nor any faithful broken-hearted sower mulcted for ever of his harvest-joy. Though there can fall a darkness on the soul when absolute devotion may seem forsaken of God no less than a mockery to men; yet in that very hour the sacrifice is crowned with immortality; and Death himself endues his conqueror with the power of an endless life. Before

" the third day " no tragedy yields up its meaning or its fruit.

Torn hearts, rent plans, lost work! All our little world an elusive Carcassonne. Choked with grief, we cry that Hope is dead; but, if we are " in the Way," we too may reach Emmaus; the Love we could not, or would not, recognise will become known; and dimly, in a mystery, we may come to understand how the Bread that is Broken is the Bread of Life. Even amid tears and death, nay at the very grave of the beloved, He who liveth and was dead and is alive for evermore still stands—still speaks—" Said I not unto thee that, if thou wouldst *believe*, thou shouldst see the glory of God? "

Sursum corda. Christianity is the Eternal Religion because it is the religion of Resurrection. That word is the charter of an inexhaustible power of Recovery, distinctive of all Christ's healing life and teaching, which directly meets the deepest need of the whole human race. Jesus had but played with our necessity in saying " I am the Way," or even " I am the Truth," could He not add the enabling word—*I am the Resurrection and the Life.* In this light each cross is seen to be the episode it is, and every genuine sacrifice the sowing of eternal seed. God is not mocked; neither does He mock mankind. A world like ours, subject on all hands to the slow,

inevitable working of evolutionary law, was never left without perpetual provision for the highest of all forms of evolution—the growth and progress of the human spirit. Among the possibilities of undeveloped human nature—necessarily free—must needs be tragic experiment, and even ghastly failure, before the things that are eternal (because they are spiritual) dominate humanity, and the God of Light and Love is finally chosen undisputed Ruler and Guide.

Now there is no more tragic element in the history of religion than the demonstrable fact that hostility and opposition to some signal outpouring of the Holy Spirit have usually come not from the mass of mankind but from the eminently religious, who have preferred precedents and authorities to the living conscience and the voice of Truth. It was so even with St. Paul, while he was in that bondage to outworn tradition which he came later to regard as "ignorance." Nor was there ever greater need than now for the re-baptism of Christendom into that pure enthusiasm for humanity which is the mark of those who "having tasted of the good word of God and the powers of the age to come," are also "made partakers of the Holy Ghost." This very decadence of organised religion so widely lamented is just a hand of warning on life's wall to make us attend to what the Spirit *saith* unto the Churches.

"United we stand, divided we fall," is no less true of Churches than of Nations. If to a civilisation ruined by division there is to come renascence into unity of life, should not Religion lead the way? But how can any Institution lead towards an accord which it proclaims by its own condition to be unattainable? The various States either of the British Empire or of the American Republic afford at this moment better examples of Unity of Spirit than Christendom can produce among Churches. And so long as these divided bodies of an indivisible Christ spend their strength on fortifying the limits of their separate organisations against each other, so long will the common enemy successfully undermine the citadel they ought to combine to protect. Wounded and crippled by internecine strife on futile questions of precedence—divided on the due relation of Christ's gospel of the Love of God and the Service of Man to the gospel *about* Christ which so largely supersedes it—the Church Militant seems strengthless to wield, or even to draw, that sword of the Spirit by which alone her own bonds can be cut, and the hosts of indifference and irreligion defeated.

The bitter quarrels over organisation seem more surprising than those over matters of doctrinal difference. For the very things left most open and inchoate by our Lord and His Apostles are those which have set Church against Church, dismembered

the Lord's Body, and left His Spirit to wander like the Son of Man Himself who had not where to lay His head. Of the schism of East and West—of the great sixteenth century cleavage of Western Christendom—of all the bickerings and estrangements of the last four centuries—the real *crux* has been some demand of external Authority or Organisation. Christendom seems to have gone out of its way to find a fountain of perpetual division in things which were to Christ of no account, and which to His Apostles could never outweigh the risk of any slighting of the Holy Ghost.

Those who have long doubted which of these great twin-wrongs—the world scandal of inter-State ill will or the ecclesiastical disgrace of inter-Church relations—held the palm of eminence in evil, must see, in the judgment now fallen on the one, the clearest condemnation of the other. Now that the long prevailing moral anarchy in social and international life has brought upon the world the most signal disaster in the story of mankind, the very shock of events must surely awaken Christendom from the dreamland where ecclesiastical order and organisation loom larger and more urgent than the vital needs of the spirit of man, which Christianity was given us to meet. If not,—the judgment seems certain that those separative, institutional requirements of which the

whole Church has made a fetish will inevitably extinguish its remaining influence.

Before the Church can bring the world to repentance, its own *Metanoia* must be radical and complete. And the essence of this change of mind will appear in a new readiness to put first things in the first place and truth before all. Scholastic method is bankrupt, and its conclusions except where otherwise confirmed are discredited. The days of the assumed premiss and the external authority are done. The sanctions of Religion can only found themselves on the rapidly strengthening basis of psychological experience. As at the turning point in the sixteenth century the line of true evolution passed, and with it most of the the illumination, to the Reformed Churches, in judgment for the Great Refusal—the refusal to put Truth first—so now, in this new crisis of our own day, if organised Christianity ignores its day of visitation and fails to interpret the signs of this time, such hold as it still retains on the mind and will of the world must infallibly be lost. And it will come to pass that the eternal Christ, "Who all in all *is being fulfilled*," will be discovered in the fulness of His power outside any and every organisation which makes itself, instead of Him, "Head over all things to the Church which is His Body."

The deliberate dictum of a wise and good

man[1] has already warned us that "many men have left the Church in order to be Christians." The aphorism did not refer to any one organised body more than another; but should give food for grave thought to all who hold Fellowship to be an essential of the Faith. If the Church of Christ shows itself alive enough to realise that the world is out of joint not *only* through wrong methods in secular government, but also through those of antagonistic Churches, the situation may still be saved. For then the pentecost of calamity which has overwhelmed the world may prove the prelude of a Pentecost of Blessing greater than the world has ever known. But the condition, without which nothing, is that members of Christ, by whatsoever name they call themselves, become convinced of the urgency of the call for a great transvaluation of values on the part of organised Christianity all the world over. When the survivors from the pre-war world stagger to their feet after this protracted earthquake, their outlook upon life, and by consequence upon religion, will certainly have undergone a change. It is only that which *cannot* be shaken that will remain. For the majority, questions of mint, annis and caraway seed will never again be able to oust the weightier

[1] The late Professor Bruce, quoted in a valuable address by Archdeacon J. M. Wilson, printed in *The Modern Churchman* for June, 1916.

matters of the law. Judgment, righteousness and truth will have to come first among the aims of any Faith that can expect to hold the allegiance of the human heart. Never again must the Churches give any excuse for the false idea, so damagingly exploited years ago by Cotter Morison, that Christianity encourages a divorce between the service of God and the service of Man, or that any such divorce is even possible. There is need of an altogether new enthusiasm for the art of living with and learning from our neighbours. Then each Christian body will only provoke the others to love and to good works ; for it will be ready to confess its own incompleteness and insufficiency except as bringing some essential contribution to other parts of the One Church of Christ. Once the impossible claim to exclusive monopoly in wisdom or truth is wholly cast aside, we may look forward to the final passing of the cardinal error that some man-made God of Uniformity has commissioned the particular section of the Church that we prefer to impose every detail of its distinctive doctrine, ritual, or government on all the rest, before full cooperation in work and complete fellowship in the spirit can be thought of.

After this war it will be less than ever possible for Churches to clear themselves of guilt in not combining for the sake of God and Truth in the

defeat of sin, since it is so plain that, for the sake of Man and the maintenance of public law, not only the free nations of the British Empire, but Allies so diversely governed as Russia and France, *can be joined* in one spirit for the common good. The lay mind at any rate is solidly convinced that the call of events is a call to the Church, no less than to the Nations for whose inspiration and uplifting the Church of Christ exists. The chief magistrate of the greatest city in the world is already among the prophets. He sees—what has been indicated above by uniting the witness of three famous men of strikingly opposed mentality—that the central truths of our religion are common ground; that if we valued these cardinal points as they deserve, there would be no divisions amongst us; and that if we acted on them, all our prayers would be answered. When we consider the immeasurable influence on the thought of the world those three men—Dante, Shakspere, and Bunyan—have exerted, and remember the great facts that provided constant inspiration for Catholic, Humanist, and Puritan alike, must we not be ready to fall down before high heaven in abject contrition for the hampering mass of the unnecessary with which the exigencies of separatism have weighted and obscured the old moving, saving faith of Christ in the Light and Love of God.

But let us listen again to our representative layman :

"The waste of Christian effort at the present time is appalling. The lack of religious cohesion amounts almost to paralysis compared with what might be. . . . All the Churches have been narrow and tyrannous in the past. But humanity is past that stage. Men will not contentedly return, out of the terrible shadow of this war, to the old dreary feuds of religion. They want religion to spiritualise the national existence, to enter into our politics and commerce, and permeate our social life. I am haunted with the conviction that unless the Christian Church becomes united now, when the call for Unity is so great and the opportunity (in Anglo-Saxondom at all events) so manifest, she will lose her greatest chance to become a living power in the land. . . . I am certain that the hour is fast approaching when the Church will have to decide between unity and decadence. God grant that she be so inspired as to choose unity."

If we turn from Sir Charles Wakefield to the voice of the camps themselves, Professor Newsom reports, out of a close and considerable experience, "a fine, deep habit of regarding religion as profoundly ethical." The mind of these new armies is set on "righteousness and service." The view is that "what God has done and will do for man is in order that he may live a good life. . . . Christianity is regarded as being concerned with purity, love, and a good home, with prayer to God, common worship and common endeavour. . . . The general feeling is unconscious of denominational divisions."

And the report concludes : " You cannot resist the thought that here is a mass of young humanity that ought to be held together, and taught, and uplifted by one great united Church."

My own conviction is that to resist that thought would simply mean resistance to the Holy Ghost. It is hard to see how the Christianity of Christ can become an efficacious force either to Christianise civilisation, or to carry the light of life to remoter realms, without far greater loyalty to its unifying spirit than Churches now show. The present time seems pre-eminently one for the remembrance of warning and counsel often, in one form or another, on the lips of Bishop Westcott :—" No formula which expresses clearly the thought of one generation can convey the same meaning to the generation which follows " ; or again, " In each generation the obligation is laid upon Christians to bring new problems of conduct and duty into the Divine Light, and to find their solution under the teaching of the Spirit." Thank God we have also among living bishops not a few who let men see the prophet's heart beneath the robe of the priest. " There has been since the Reformation no such time of testing for the religion of Christ as that through which we are going. Methods almost approaching revolution in their boldness will be needed to ensure that Christianity shall in the days that lie before us be the great moving force

in our Empire. Assuredly the Church will have to effect a great purification within herself; so that she may better appeal to the cravings of the people."[1] When such words appear on the leader page of *The Times* over a bishop's signature, still more when we remember that such an episcopal utterance by no means stands alone but tends even to be typical, we may take heart of grace. A few notes of leadership like this do more to justify episcopacy than reams of argument. The Bishop here leaves it to the conscience of the Church to interpret what is to be understood by the "great purification within herself" that he desiderates. Is it possible to see anything of the nature of this "heavenly washing"?

It is at least clear that no river of Lethe will suffice. As there is no virtue for us even in the great Atonement except in so far as we find in it a real At-one-ment of man with God—as even forgiveness fails of its chief intent until it becomes to us the actual Divine "forthgiving" of the word's innermost significance—so here it is plain that nothing can avail save "the living water" which not only cleanses, but invigorates the cleansed. This revival of half-dead virtue, this

[1] Bishop of Birmingham's Letter to *The Times*. It appeared on July 1st, 1916, a day otherwise memorable for the inauguration of fresh triumphs of life over machinery, and of the spirit of Liberty over the worst example of perverted organisation the world has ever known.

reintegration of each human personality, must precede those corporate triumphs to which the Church looks forward. If the Church would see the Nation rise up after its purification by sacrifice, and return, like Dante from the waters of Eunöe—

> "Regenerate, in the manner of new trees
> That are renewed with a new foliage,
> Pure, and disposed to mount unto the stars;"

the Church must forget the splendours of Abana and Pharpar, and herself consent to bathe seven times in the humbler stream to which the prophets of every age have pointed. What Church and Nation alike need is a re-baptism into *a new sense of God*; His true nature, and His genuine demands on human life. Only as the Church of the future stoops to conquer will it ever wield the victorious influence it desires for the winning of the world. The hold of Christ on the heart of humanity is only to be won by the spirit of His methods who "emptied Himself" of His glory, and for us men and for our salvation "came down" from heaven. When the Spirit and the Bride say "Come" in the tone of the Master who coupled the most tremendous assertion of authority—"Come unto Me . . . and I will give you Rest," with the most astonishing (to the natural man) of all credentials—"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," the world will respond to the appeal. It is the vice of pride

from which men's souls recoil. It is the spirit of the crucifix that wins. When men see in "the Body of Christ" the unmistakable instrument and organ of His Spirit, in the singleness of its regard for human need, no one will challenge Church authority, or make light of its demand.

Even in an early stage of such advance, if there appeared a sincere resolve to reduce obstructive institutional demands, the worst scandals of Disunion would begin to die away, and the vanished spiritual power of moral witness correspondingly return. Though it is true that every holy city, every new Jerusalem, cometh down out of heaven from God, Christendom must recognise the companion truth, that "our remedies oft with ourselves do lie that we ascribe to heaven." There are always many who eagerly await some new wonder-wine of God; but the miracle is only to be had on the old terms: "*Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.*" Unless we throw in what we have—all that has already been given to us to feel and know—we are holding back God's power. Was not one of Christ's plainest words to the Jewish exclusionists of His day to the effect that God could raise "children unto Abraham" even from the stones? Such a word, *mutatis mutandis*, must surely at the very least dispose us to lean less upon a mechanical theory of manually transmitted grace than upon a verifiable spiritual

succession of apostolic souls. It is to one of the greatest of Apostles, who never knew Christ save "in the spirit," that we owe a re-moulding of Christianity, and its launch as a world-religion instead of a mere sectional form of Jewish dissent. But what did Paul regard as the base and fundament of his conviction of authority? To what did he habitually return to authenticate the commission which Judaising Christians were always eager to disparage? It was to his own spiritual experience—the heavenly vision on the Damascus road. This immense man could find nothing more sure and certain than the confidence derived from the God-given impulse which had transformed the Pharisee of straitest sect into a magnanimous Missionary of the Cross, longing to be all things to all men, if by any means he might save some.

The thickest clouds threatening the future rise out of those marshy low-lands where this Catholicism of magnanimity is contemned by the Churches it might enrich, and is even accounted unfaithfulness to the Christ whose mind it reflects. But behind these mists the sun of Truth is shining, and rays of hope and healing already light the higher ground including some lofty crests of diverse contour. Let us close this chapter in the radiation from two of these high places:

"The vocation of the Anglican Church. . . . is to maintain on the basis of the Catholic creed and system, the

largeness, the comprehensiveness, of the Catholic Church; it is to seek to show how much of what is now separated in many divided portions of Christendom is capable of being held together on the Catholic basis." [1]

Here is the other instance:

"Catholicity is indeed a glorious ideal, so long as it is the true Catholicity of Christ, and not the false Catholicity of the Churches as sometimes taught in modern days, which is a wholly different thing. . . . In the coming age, that Church will be found safest, strongest, most glorious in the eyes of men, and most holy in the sight of God, which uplifts as its most fascinating ideal and all-absorbing purpose, the Divine Son of Man in all the splendour of His humiliation and all the lowliness of His majesty. Secondary things—such as episcopacy, sacraments, Church ordinances, and organisations—are not unimportant; far otherwise, they are of great importance. But the primary facts in Christianity are the Fatherhood of God, redemption through Christ, goodness through the Holy Ghost, and the universal brotherhood of men. Let us teach these things, preach these truths, live these realities. Let us make these facts the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and end of our ministry; and all other things, social well-being, political and civic integrity, harmony between capital and labour, domestic felicity, international righteousness, concord between the Churches, and the cessation of wars among nations, will be added unto us." [2]

[1] Bishop of Oxford in *Diocesan Gazette*, November, 1915.
[2] Bishop of Carlisle's *Episcopal Charge*, 1916.

CHAPTER VIII

DIVINE SPIRIT AND HUMAN SYSTEMS

THE recent dicta which closed our last chapter have a peculiar interest for the student of that more practicable part of our subject known as Home reunion. They were cited together for the value of their witness to the existence of episcopal ideals of "catholic largeness and comprehensiveness." Catholicity indeed is the keynote of both; although it would be idle to pretend that the connotation of the word in the mind of each speaker is identical. These two summaries of aim and vocation are in fact no less typical in their difference than in their agreement; and could they be harmoniously combined a large group of difficulties would be solved. It is just because the ideal of the English Church does combine them for the practical purposes of work and worship that it holds any promise of being instrumental in uniting all bodies of Christians into one. Those of soundest mind among our scholars have never

regretted the Anglican intention to incorporate Christian truth in the variety of proportion which best exemplifies the value of unity of spirit.

There is a reality and strength of spiritual cohesion which is altogether independent of rigorist and centralised discipline. It is akin to that unity of the British Empire which appeared in 1914 to the worshippers and slaves of organisation a union *pour rire*. To critics of this kind no mistake was more natural; but none was more profound, as Junkerthum is now aware. It is the freedom —involving on the surface a seemingly dangerous looseness—which gives grasp to the spiritual hold; and that after all counts for most in the sphere of religion as in that of politics, say what men will. Hence differences of view between Christians, or even between Bishops sharing one successional illumination, bring no tears to eyes that turn to the true light of unity and away from the *ignis fatuus* of uniformity. The only rational aim for many years to come is not the absorption of one diversity by another, but a great release of now imprisoned power through a new welcome by authority to the joint contribution of varieties in thought and method to the saving supremacy of the Spirit of Christ. That Spirit it must ever be the fundamental duty of a Church to express with the utmost freedom consistent with the corporate character of its witness.

The saying that "good men everywhere are of one religion" contains more truth than the general mind is at present able to receive. Before the religion of Goodness is seen to matter more than that of correct opinion, Time and Events have many more marches yet to make. And the rod of bitter experience will no doubt often have to fall upon the race before the generation arrives which respects Christ's order of precedence—"He that wills to do the Will shall know of the doctrine," and accepts His discriminatory rule—"Ye shall know them by their fruits." Then truth will no longer be confined in the leash of tradition; then discipleship will begin to count for more than organisation; and the creedal records of ancient intellectual war, handled according to the spirit and not according to the letter, will furnish terms of fellowship, instead of weapons of exclusion. But, meanwhile, the Church of Christ ought even now to be able to grasp, for the benefit of religion, the truth long ago discovered by human society, to wit, that no better basis for fruitful friendship can exist than difference of opinion with oneness of sentiment. Hence the urgent thing is to forward whatever policy the rulers of organised Christianity can be induced to adopt so long as it makes for the removal of obstacles to unity of spirit and combination of endeavour. It is the palpable want of cohesion

in all current Christian effort, however well devised, which keeps it from telling on the life and thought of the world. Everywhere these severances on the score of divergent opinion, between those whose aims and sentiments are one, destroy good will and frustrate the advance of God's Kingdom.

Perhaps nothing is more immediately wanted for the internal peace of the Anglican Church, and for a wise direction of her external relations, than a working union of the principles and method set forth by the two Bishops above quoted. Let us begin by assuming the two ideals identical, without too curiously inquiring whether Dr. Gore's conception of "the largeness and comprehensiveness of the Catholic Church" does or does not fall short of "the true Catholicity of Christ" which is the watchword of the Bishop of Carlisle. The method by which each proposes to maintain his ideal is certainly the same in character, since each builds upon a basis; but the terms of reference vary with the form in which the ideal of comprehensiveness takes shape in each mind. Accordingly, "the basis of Catholic creed and system," paramount for the one, yields precedence for the other to "the primary facts of Christianity."

Now, still assuming the two objectives to constitute a single aim—still understanding "the largeness of the Catholic Church" accurately to represent "the Catholicity of Christ"—directly

a practical attempt is made to move nearer the ideal by using one or other of these episcopally proposed bases, there emerges a very instructive fact. The fact is that while the comprehensiveness of catholicity never fails to gain strength and support from the basis of the primary facts of Christianity, it is continually checked and hindered when referred to the basis of Catholic creed and system. It would only be tedious to recount the evidence for this from the futile opposition so long maintained between religion and science, from the attitude of the Church toward the just aspirations of the Labour world, or toward the rational section of the Women's movement. Indeed, no proof is necessary, since the bitter cry for re-interpretation and re-statement is borne on every breeze, and the Erasmus is never wanting who reminds us that "to identify new learning with heresy is to make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance."

The plain inference is that the effectual working of a truly catholic comprehensiveness depends upon the good will and capacity of the Church of Christ to bring "creed and system" into such accord with "the primary facts,"—tradition into such agreement with truth,—that the whole Church may gradually be brought to work together from a single basis towards a common end. This unification of basis by consent, under the guidance

of the Holy Spirit, can alone allay the suspicion (if it be nothing more) that the episcopal *ends* proposed are not in fact identical—that "the largeness and comprehensiveness of the Catholic Church" means really something smaller than "the true catholicity of Christ." If our Anglican vocation be, as excellently stated by Dr. Gore, "to seek to show how much [not how little] of what is now separated in many divided portions of Christendom can be held together on the Catholic basis"—that basis must assuredly be defined, interpreted, and if necessary extended, so as to honour above all "the primary facts of Christianity"; in short, so as to respect that characteristic principle of the doctrine of Christ for which the Bishop of Carlisle contends—the principle of putting first things first. For the trumpet of history gives no uncertain sound on two points. It declares (1) that the Unity of Christendom has always gone to pieces on a misinterpretation of the limits of that largeness and comprehensiveness which all men feel to be the essence of a true Catholicity; and (2) that almost every wreck might have been avoided if organised Christianity had found the grace to judge according to Christ between first and secondary things, by "rightly handling the word of truth." If, then, the failure in fidelity to these companion principles has involved us in the divisions we deplore, it is through their

recovery and re-enthronement we must seek the unity we desire.

Things being as they are, it is clear that not only the eventual Reunion of Christendom but any really appreciable advance in that direction must depend on new gifts of grace as well as upon juster views of truth. We badly need another Pentecost. Owing to the hardening results of estrangement grown habitual—to a long continued hankering after an impossible and undesirable uniformity—to the failure of mistaken attempts to effect by compromise what can only be won by comprehension — the task of creating such a unity of spirit as might prove effective as witness, because visible in one fellowship of work and prayer, has become almost hopelessly difficult. It is therefore only as the demon of partisanship, so much more odious and unnatural in religion than in politics, is exorcised, and the promised power of the living Spirit of God is allowed to flood all the channels of institutional system and even to overflow them ; only as men come to feel in a new way that " the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment " ; that the principles of Order and Liberty can ever be reconciled. For the whole garish efflorescence of Disunion between Churches is finally reducible to one root-problem ; namely, *the readjustment of ecclesiastical System so that it may help, and not hinder, the*

regenerating work of the Spirit of God on the spirit of man. The great task laid upon all Christendom alike is "to treasure and guard the wonder of a God-given truth, of a new Life working among men to transform and renew them, of a Name not only of human excellence and achievement, but of Divine rescue and assistance—the Name of our Salvation, Jesus Christ our Lord." The problem is to secure for the efficacious fulfilment of this task a greater measure of joint cooperation, which may gradually ripen into union on the lines of all that is best, and therefore most fit to survive, in the Catholic *and* Protestant ideals of Christianity.

As the Bishop of Winchester has pointed out,[1] there are two ways in which "the God-given reality" is most truly preserved—the Spiritual and the Sacramental.

"The first is the way of the faith which, resting upon the promise that He would be with us always, clasps fast the truth of this ever-living nearness of Jesus. It remembers, too, and lives upon, the promise of the gift of the Spirit, Who should be the means by which He is near to us and we to Him. It finds Jesus present through the presence of the Spirit, by Whom comes strength into our weakness and light into our darkness. It fortifies itself by all the marvellous and undeniable record of Christian experience. This is the faith which found a special outburst in Quakerism; but in less naked or isolated forms, it has its long record, particularly in all that is summed up as Christian

[1] *Constructive Quarterly* for March, 1915, pp. 12, 13.

Mysticism—all the life of inward union and communion between Jesus and His own. . . . This is the fresh and flowing fountain which renews the very heart of the Church and of its members. But alone it is too ethereal, too purely internal. It is apt to become indistinguishable from our own states and emotion. It lacks substance, and regulation, and kinship with the texture of life.

But it is not meant to be alone. For the God-given thing of which I have spoken was not ashamed to be concrete. It took shape, first in one Life, at such a time and such a place, in Jesus born of Mary, teaching in Galilee, dying on Calvary. It took shape, at once, afterwards in the company and flock and congregation and body of a Church of Jesus. Here was the very scene and the very instrument of the work of the Spirit, giving severally to men their gifts, binding them up into a whole of common faith, common activity, mutual love. It took shape in things which formed parts and endowments and actions of this common life; in the Breaking of the Bread, with its utter simplicity and its profound spiritual meaning and efficacy; in the admission-act of cleansing, illumination, and incorporation by the washing; in the prescribed assembling of themselves together; in messages uttered by those whom the Spirit moved to speak; in the ministry of appointed men which Jesus Himself had sanctioned and begun when, so carefully, He chose and trained the Twelve. It is to all this we give the name Sacramental; because in all this the Spirit works through outward things, and the outward things become spiritual and talismans of power. And the thing that is vital to it is that it is not of man but of God: not contrived by man as convenient, but put forth by the New Life that was given in Jesus, and embodied itself in these forms and acts. So it put itself into a shape which had consistency, and could be recognised; which helped men by acting upon them from without as well as within. Between it and the spiritual or mystical there is antithesis but no opposition: *they complement one another;*

they guard each other from their characteristic dangers—the one tending to evaporate faith into a sentiment, the other to stiffen grace into a machine."

Seldom, indeed, have the cardinal facts been more justly envisaged than in this balanced statement of the naked truth out of which the powers of evil have succeeded in evolving the tragedy of Christian history. As Bishop Talbot truly adds, the only remedy, and the only hope, lie in a spiritual miracle,—"in the work of the Spirit of God breaking down barriers of separation, and moving mountains of difficulty; in turning enemies into allies; in teaching things that have fought with one another to combine with one another. . . . It may be that God is drawing us towards Unity by a common sense of need. It was when men fancied that essentials were secure that they had less scruple in falling apart. They did not realise how entirely *the witness of the Truth claims all that we can diversely bring*. . . . But the time is surely come when we know or ought to know that we need one another;—that the Spiritual and the Sacramental were never meant to be anything but united; that if the Sacramental is worse than nothing without the Spirit, the Spiritual needs means, and the Holy Spirit has devised means, whereby to touch us and to assure us of itself."[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

The whole tone, no less than the actual tenor of such words, addressed to Presbyterian hearers by the occupant of a leading Anglican See, may excellently serve to remind us of the truth, which trivial chaffering and squalid contention within the body of the English Church do so much to obscure, that the Anglican Communion, regarded as an institution, is the nearest approach yet made by Organised Christianity on a considerable scale towards the incorporation in one system of rival affinities which ought to be regarded as complementary, but which Rome and Geneva persist in making mutually exclusive. If internal faction allowed due supremacy to this true Anglican ideal, Canterbury might yet become the rallying point for the Reformed Faith throughout the world. But this can only come to pass after a mighty exorcism, here of the schismatic spirit which is the evil genius of protestantism, and there of that no less evil exclusiveness which is the bane of a perverted, rigorist catholicism. This deliverance is now terribly needed, not only without, but within the Church of England, which (to be candid) by no means affords the alluring example of unity attained by comprehension which her constitution should produce. It is to be hoped that the present "Mission" may effect the uplifting of the whole Anglican Church into a new atmosphere of magnanimity—a grace heretofore ranking very low,

notably with the ecclesiastical layman. This change of itself would work wonders. But the omens will continue sinister while extremists condemn the very quality by virtue of which alone any great Christian organisation can nowadays either hold together at all, or succeed in combining enough variety of mental and spiritual power to make its united witness effective.

It is inevitable that a comprehensiveness of the only saving kind should offer hostages to fortune. The narrow purview of the ordinary mind, the common distaste for any kind of hard thinking, the English hatred of ideas (which so baffled the brilliant Bishop who tried to do his duty by the Roman clique in his London Diocese)[1]; all help to popularise the partisan with his clear-cut definition of a bit of truth temptingly disguised to represent the whole. Nothing, of course, is easier, or perhaps more mischievous, than to make merry over the dogmatism at St. Peter's, countered painfully at St. Paul's hard by, or proved preposterous by Apollos round the corner. But ministerial myopy is one thing, and the ideal of a Church System is another. The real danger begins when an effort is made to reduce the message of a Church to the formula of a party; when the natural enthusiasm felt for that side of the truth by which a man's own soul is chiefly sustained blinds him

[1] Bishop Creighton.

to the patent fact that other souls can only live on other food, and that this also the Church has been commissioned to provide. Anything like a conspiracy to capture for a party the Anglican system, deliberately founded on a basis of comprehension, can only be regarded as an act of treachery. With its success would certainly pass the last chance for our National Church ever to become the nucleus and centre for the religious life of the Nation. It may be said that there is only one part of a party among us which has any design or desire to monopolise the Church of England ; and it may be hoped that this section of Catholic rigorists, whose model is Rome, is smaller in number than the noise of their champions suggests. But when so much is at stake, it is no time to mince words. The prospect is dark both for our own peace, and for the least chance of Anglican usefulness as a unifying power in the direction of its primary mission, if the destiny of our Church is to be shrivelled into that of a propagandist society for the cultivation of almost every Roman proclivity except its admirable discipline.

It is not reassuring to find in the Bishop of Oxford's recent treatment of the *Basis of Anglican Fellowship* that six pages suffice to deal with this Romanising menace, while thirteen are required to discourage fraternity with Reformed Communions, and twenty to disparage "the claims

of Liberalism," and to throw doubt on the progressive character of the facts elicited by critical inquiry. Dr. Gore assures us that he is not an instance of "Mile-stones"; but the fact remains that the editor of *Lux Mundi* is surprisingly ready to rend the editor of *Foundations*, and eager (page 44) to whittle away the "line of deep cleavage between the Church of England and that of Rome" laid bare by the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline of ten years ago. The very considerable influence of the Bishop of Oxford rests on the general recognition of the value of an alert, vigorous and sincere mind which has often admirably contradicted its own theory that Bishops cannot be expected to be Prophets too. But, as years pass, it is plain to most observers that Dr. Gore increasingly confines his prophetic gift to spheres that are free from the trammels of ecclesiastical usage. And we can but regret that when the vision of the Catholicism that is certainly coming encounters the claims of the Catholicism that is still anchored in the Middle Ages, the balance of his judgment inclines more and more in favour of stringency in limiting re-interpretation and towards an arbitrary treatment of the kindred necessity of re-statement.

In these circumstances one recalls Dr. Gore's emphatic exhortation, at the Southampton Congress, to make up our minds at all costs, *even*

we make them up wrong. Is this counsel a side-light upon the difficulty of preventing even a single intelligence from becoming a kingdom divided against itself unless the priest decides to make no terms with the prophet? Surely there is some more excellent way whereby the growing demand of new light, of changed conditions, and above all of the urge of the Spirit, combining as they now do to put fresh strain on the basis of creed and system, may be met. In lands where that basis has been most slavishly upheld, it has certainly not brought the security desired, either for the prestige of religion or for the uplifting of the people.

Organised Christianity has been faced by no crisis to compare with the present since the sixteenth century; and the attitude of our leaders at such a juncture is consequently of vital importance, and to every Churchman of the most anxious interest,—at all events to those of us who cannot comfort ourselves like Dr. Figgis by holding that the "outcry about the failure of the Church is needless" since "with the advent of liberty and the increase of education, conventional Christianity is bound to decay." We had begun to hope the time had come when the Church might be thought to stand for something more than conventional Christianity. Some may be consoled by hearing that "those who do remain adherents of the Christian

Church are likely to be the more real." But *is* this likely to follow from the sifting out of men described by our consoler as "kept away from our Churches by a feeling of their unreality"? And when Dr. Figgis goes on to say that "men just leave the Church on one side" because they find there "no light on ordinary life, and on the work they have to do," our apologist himself is found among the critics after all.

In such case, surely the barriers which separate those who are one in desiring to put life and truth before the world in a way that can be recognised as real should not be magnified, but reduced in every possible way. This is no time for System to be rigidly set up, as a hindrance to the Unity to which our Founder pledged His followers by the whole tenor of His life and prayers. Let us rather act upon the wisdom of our Anglican Fathers urged upon us some twenty years ago, "that every opportunity be taken to emphasise the Divine purpose of visible unity among Christians as a fact of revelation."[1]

If we really believe the recovery of this lost Christian virtue to be certainly the will of God, we must assign all needless hindrances to some misdirection of the will of man. Probably the error most extensively fruitful in mischief has been the too frequent treatment of the Kingdom of God—to which Jesus Christ directed His dis-

[1] Resolution 34, Lambeth Conference, 1897.

ciples' devotion—as if it were identical with this or that specimen of external organisation which during succeeding ages asserted itself to be its best, or only, representative. At all events the logical sequel of such a confusion of thought would be marked by the very features that have been recurrent in the Church history of the past, and which also very widely characterise the weakness of institutional religion in the present day. For it is plain that Christendom needed only to substitute the Church as being itself a complete equivalent for the Kingdom of God, in order to change the outline of Christ's ideal, and shift the centre of gravity of Christian effort. Devotion would forthwith concentrate less directly on the regeneration of the world than upon the aggrandisement of the Church. Success would be sought more by compelling allegiance to an external system than by clearing fresh channels for the transforming forces of a renewing Spirit. Sowing the seed of the kingdom, spreading the leaven of its power, discovering the hidden wonders of its spiritual treasure, counting all well lost for the securing of the pearl of price—all such parables of Christian duty would naturally tend to give place to the one paramount necessity of skill in detecting the notes of a true Church, since *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. The same source of error would explain the appearance of those

familiar intellectualist attempts to distinguish tares from wheat, against which Christ gave specific warning, lest with the tares the wheat also be uprooted. Thus, too,. the " fish of every kind " in the mighty drag-net of " the kingdom of heaven " would forthwith be sorted, not by any moral principle of discrimination ; not as they are bad or good after their kind ; but by the standard of this organisation or of that—by the dominant shibboleth of this century or of the other. From Isaiah to Ruskin the protest of the prophet is made in vain ; and *yet the truth abides* that nothing is permanently helpful to any race or condition of men but the spirit kindled in their own hearts. It is a spiritual kingdom into which at his new birth the Christian citizen is reborn.

The Church of Christ is indispensable to the world by virtue of her mission to proclaim and establish the Kingdom of God. The mission is fulfilled in the degree the Church succeeds in holding at hand, not for herself but for mankind, the new life which is the essence, and the new world which is the aim of Christianity. Out of the new life, which is one of pure inwardness, by contagion of the good and by the power of the Spirit, the new world is to grow. In so far as any Church ignores or obscures the root-fact that the life into which the world is to be quickened and re-made

is essentially spiritual, and fails to shape its methods and system accordingly, needless barriers to unity will inevitably be created, and the Church's Mission will fail of those prizes promised by our Lord to the followers who faithfully recognised the nature of the dispensation under which He set them to work.

It is impossible to doubt that just as unwillingness to accept the guidance of the Holy Spirit more than anything else robbed Christendom of unity in earlier days, so it is a similar unfaithfulness which chiefly tends to perpetuate the divisions by which the Church of to-day is mulcted in her evangelising power. We know how here at home she stands among the people too often as an alien presence, touching only a bare fringe of the national life. If we look abroad, despite much heroic personal labour, and an immense machinery supported with large liberality, we can but reckon a precarious harvest of hundreds or thousands, while millions—two-thirds or more of the human race—remain strangers to any form of Christianity. Whether we regard the failure in the great outlying spaces of the world—so largely due to dissensions among the faithful and contradictory presentments of the Faith,—or seek the causes for indifference among our own masses and for the alienation of cultivated minds, we shall seldom find that it

is Christ, or the principles of Christ, from which men turn away, but rather from the formality of the demands preferred by traditional religion.

It is a grievous anomaly that there should be so many to-day who genuinely wish to be Christian, who by their very desire *are* religious, yet who are as much repelled by the Church as they are attracted by Religion.

Organised Christianity, whether Catholic or Protestant, Churches whether "Free" or connected with the State, unite in confessing and lamenting serious defections. How has this happened? It is simply the result of the growing conviction that the corporate systems which fail to infect the world with a higher spirit than the world can produce fail altogether. In the long run, after all, it is the "fruit" which determines judgment, however denominational Christianity may toil to make it turn on views. That is why your Bampton Lecturer, candidly searching out the true *Reproach of the Gospel*, is brought to the conclusion that "the striking contrast between the lives of professing Christians, and the rules they profess to accept, is *the* great religious difficulty of the present day"; and why your sociological observer, too, is found declaring in the *Quarterly Review*—"The teachings of the Church are fast ceasing to exert a living influence." Now it is just that living influence which the divisions of the Church destroy;

and the death of those divisions and the rebirth of the living influence both await the dawning of one day—the day when the Church is no longer content to leave embalmed in a creedal statement, and proceeds to act upon, those cardinal words —*I believe in the Holy Ghost.*

The eventual arrival of that day is as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun. The present problem is to reduce the mass of institutional prejudice which needlessly delays the dawn. Mechanical exactitudes, creedal niceties, hierarchical correctness have their own value; but they cannot guarantee for a single votary one solitary ray of spiritual light. When all is said, the apostolic word applies: "The glory of the terrestrial is one, and the glory of the celestial is another."

There was an outward glory of the ancient Temple of which Jesus Himself was conscious: "See what great stones, and what buildings are here!" But the individual, or the Church, commits an error which grows like the letting out of water, when structural fitness or antique prestige begins to count higher than the Shechinah itself, or to restrict the mode of its epiphany,—when the preciosity of a sacerdotal breastplate is preferred to its illumination by God's *urim* and *thummim* of Light and Perfection. Jesus Christ proved Himself Master of the human spirit because He saw when the time had come for the Divine reality

of the Everlasting Mercy to be enshrined anew, if the revelation of God was to come home to the heart of the world. And so, ere long, it was of another and a nobler "temple" that the record runs: "We beheld His glory—the glory as of One begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." It was thus alone the foundation could be laid of the kingdom not of this world which Christ came to found. So only can it be kept in power.

No surer sign exists of the unifying, comprehending gospel of the Spirit—as distinct from the law of ordinances which tends to divide and exclude—than this marriage of *Grace* with Truth. A world that has heard the Sermon on the Mount will not go back to Sinai. We are not under the Law but under Grace. Nor can a world that needs more than Moses be held in bondage to Aquinas. No imagination is more vain, however seriously some dream of it, than that any power or persuasion can impose upon mankind to-day the moribund authority still clinging to the dead hand of mediæval theory and tradition. The more excellent way should surely not be hidden from a Church that traces its very birth to Pentecost. To ignore it is to raise suspicion that just because the living Spirit of Christ pays small respect to persons or denominations, therefore He—the Lord and the Life-giver—has become suspect as Teacher and Guide? Yet until His authority

is allowed the place assigned it in the New Testament, the Church will never silence nor satisfy the human cry which rises out of a genuine sense of loss: "Back to Jesus Himself; to His sublime morality of the Spirit, applicable to all ages, and true for all time."

If the Church of Christ exists to Christianise the world, that commission can only be fulfilled on lines laid down by Christ Himself. One of the main ways by which the Holy Ghost would guide the Church into all truth was said to be by bringing to remembrance "whatsoever I have said." And that gospel of the Founder was one so inward and spiritual that one of His watchwords was—"The Kingdom of God is within you"; and another—"The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment." And when His apostles enlarge upon these principles, they say: The Kingdom consists in nothing outward; not eating and drinking, not circumcision or uncircumcision; not ceremonial rites; but involves a new creation, a new life; a continual education of the soul in the love of God and man, and in the righteousness, peace, and joy of those that worship the Father in spirit and in truth. How elementary! yes, but how germinal, how eternally productive! Would it ever have been said that teaching truly developed on these lines "is fast ceasing to exert a living influence"? May there not be something

more than rhetoric after all in the word of one of the prophets—"It is the unhappy delusion of the Church that it knows the Teaching of Jesus"?

It was the prerogative of One alone to say, "I am the Truth." A charlatan might make the utterance, but none could make it good but He Who vouched it by a life of such oneness with God that many, who lived nearer the Life's light than we, held the humanity of Jesus in graver doubt than His Divinity. Even now, after nineteen centuries, His memory still moves the world like nothing else. This Life and this Teaching became an immortal seed, whose guardianship and growth were entrusted to a human Society which was to be for ever actuated by the living Spirit of its Founder: "Ye shall be My witnesses." Is there a more vital need for "the beloved community" than to feel utterly humbled? For had the Church proved to be the perfect organ of Christ's Spirit He intended, the record of Christendom could not have been what it is. Neither the unpleasant truths of which the air is full, nor the testimony I have quoted, are voiced by ignorance or prejudice or unbelief. The criticism is not directed against any specific body in particular, but against the whole form of its organised presentment. If only the Church thus comprehensively understood would set itself, instead of merely resenting the facts, to track down their causes and remove them,

a great restoration of influence would immediately appear. Much of the best thought of the world, now alienated by ecclesiastical divisions and intransigence, would rally at once to a sincere and genuine effort to reinstate in the power of its simple purity the life-giving doctrine of Jesus Christ Himself and His Apostles.

Why should we Churchmen delude ourselves? We cannot for ever go on ascribing failure to the world's corruption and denying any loss of savour in the salt provided by the Church to meet it. The world is assuredly not worse to-day than when Christianity was born, and pursued a victorious way,—until it became a political success. Every problem that can possibly present itself to the Church in any age folds up finally into the one fidelity of adherence to the spirit and principles of the Christianity of Christ. If that spirit and those principles, fairly tried, are powerless to renew "that strange amalgam of superficial culture and deep-rooted barbarism, of pride and timidity, of shrewdness and ignorance, which the New Testament calls 'the world'," then the whole Evangel is a fraud, and the world's hope is dead. If, on the other hand, the power of the original Faith has never had fair trial on a world-scale, then every instinct of loyalty to the Church's Founder drives and holds us to the duty of discovering in what way the witness of this immense

structure of Catholic and Protestant Christendom could be made more efficacious for the spiritual advancement of mankind.

Now when an Apostle described the Church as the pillar and stay of the truth, it was the Church of the *living* God of which he spoke ; and therefore assuredly a *living* Church he had in mind. The phrase suggests the picture of an *Ecclesia Docens* bent upon translating the laws of the kingdom Christ proclaimed into the terms of a continuously current revelation. No Church can remain the pillar and stay of the truth except by studying how to maintain its influence and keep its power of appeal alive amid the changing ways of thought in each successive age. The most truly *conservative* way to fulfil this mission requires a readiness to revise from time to time the methods used ; since any dogmatic expression handed down as a vehicle of Truth must inevitably be tinged with the philosophy and cosmology of its own day. No historical Church, therefore, can be true to its contemporary calling if it shirks the labour of distinguishing among its traditions those germinative principles of the Gospel which alone are eternally vital. Moreover, the release of those principles from hampering and obscuring overgrowths, so as to secure them in full power to revive and renew, is a matter of continuous duty. In the wise, strong words of Dr. Collins, late Bishop of Gibraltar,

—" the living theology of a living Church must be constantly modifying its affirmation, shifting its ground and changing its centre of gravity ; . . . it is preserved from stagnation and death by the confession, or at least the repudiation, of its own mistakes ; by the rejection of ways of thought that have grown old, of antiquated theories and exploded facts which it once accepted in common with every form of human thought."

Is the Church as we know it showing much sign of sincere desire to act in that spirit ? Does it, for instance, recollect that metaphysical elaboration of doctrine is nothing but a stumbling-block to the Western mind of to-day ? Does it act upon the knowledge that even the terms of a great Christian symbol may, in the natural course of the development of human thought, tend rather to disintegrate the Faith they once helped to keep whole and undefiled ?[1] Is the Church generally awake to the stark impossibility for even the best approximation to truth, in any religious formula of human devising, to remain in the same

[1] To the instructed student " there is no document which more adequately struggles to represent two sides of truth simultaneously than does the Athanasian Creed." Nevertheless, it cannot be edifying for an average congregation to recite in public worship any document they do not understand, probably misinterpret, and certainly dislike. Moreover, the announcement of damnation for the heterodox (including the whole Eastern Church) is inconsistent with the Creed's own statement of fate being determined by conduct —" they that have done good "—" they that have done evil."

sense true for every age alike ? The acknowledged basis of creedal authority is the biblical record ; it is therefore impossible to screen off creedal statements from the light that enables the nature and inspiration of the Bible to be infinitely better understood now than it was when the Creeds were framed. The fact is that not only are the primitive, mediæval, and modern minds differently constituted, but every epoch—in these rapid days we may well say, with Westcott, every generation—has its own peculiar needs, its own distinctive outlook upon life. If, then, the supreme and irreducible claim of Christ upon all ages and upon every people is to be kept dominant ; that claim must needs be so exhibited as to arrest human thought and inspire human life in all their changing phases, and not so as to violate man's growing heritage of experience and knowledge.

If such considerations legitimately affect the interpretation of Creeds, they equally apply to the whole field of doctrinal statement, and ought accordingly to temper the rigidity of the whole ecclesiastical system. We need not be pragmatists in order to realise that the Ideas that create organisations are greater than the framework which too often becomes their tomb. The contrast is surely very striking between religion as it is often presented by the Church and the Eternal Religion of Him whose constant challenge was,

" If I say the Truth, why do ye not believe Me ? " " Why do ye not of your own selves judge what is right ? " This sort of method is wholly independent of logical processes that passing time and growing light may afterwards discredit ; it sharply indicates the gulf between the everlasting principles of the Speaker and the vast doctrinal superstructure of later Christendom, reared often on baseless foundations and cumbered with pagan remains. Such an edifice necessarily contained the seeds of its own decay, as man's means of valuing and of verifying truth advanced. Nothing proves Infallibility so fallible as attempts to stop the clock of human thought in an evolutionary world. The bases of faith are bound to shift from ground felt to have become a bog towards a reliable foundation that cannot be moved. The psychological change is already fruitful ; and is full of promise for the future. For as faith ceases to sum itself up in mere adherence to this or that intellectual proposition, it will more and more stand for the reproduction of the essential spirit of a Life. When the excluding walls have been compassed the full seven times, they will fall ; and the spiritual forces of Unity will find themselves free of the Christian citadel whose " many gates " are naturally approached by many roads.

As the gates can never be shut, let us not waste time in blockading the roads. However we may

interpret this time, all seem conscious of impending change. Is the will of man again to thwart the will of God? Will the crisis pass, like many another, without any coming of the Kingdom in new power? Not if words written not long ago prove at all prophetic :—

"All things seem to witness that a change is at the doors; that Christendom is even now on the very eve of judgment; and yet that the break-up of the Church, like that of Israel of old, will raise the world another step, and lead, not only to the departure of the fleshly forms of Christ, but to an outpouring of the Spirit such as hitherto has not been known, and to an attainment by the race of an opening of Heaven and the things of God, which as yet has been the lot of very few."[1]

Something of this kind may actually be in store for us. But for Churches, as for men, the truth that transforms after this manner is always the reward of vision. The want of the world is a touch of the power that brought to the poet Browning, for instance, such a wealth of insight. Without that, we may remain in love with a lore which only tends to stupefy, or with a kind of truth which only grows stagnant within us; nor ever realise that it is not by these that man is "removed from the developed brute," and changed into "a God—though in the germ." The time is perhaps nearer than men think when it will be realised, not by the prophet only, or the poet,

[1] Andrew Jukes in 1900.

but by the Churchman, that priest Caponsacchi "sitting in a muse over the opened Summa" may so continue to sit, strengthless, while his inward life is racked over "the gap 'twixt what is and what should be." For it is only the ray of light direct from God (Pompilia is the symbol for the nonce) which can either recover the world, or change the monk, and pass him swift and sure "into another state under new rule"—the rule of that super-law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which frees from sin and death. This gleaming vision of the nature of the truth that quickens runs like a shining thread through all this glorious weaver's tapestry of life. Open almost where you will, and you are made to see and feel that only the touch of Grace, and not the knife of logic, can keep Truth living—no mere mummified remembrance, but a bubbling well for ever springing up unto eternal life. It gives us David's eloquence and charm in *Saul*; tells the musician's secret in *Abt Vogler*; disposes problems in *La Saisiaz*; and glorifies *The Death in the Desert.* It moves—an ineffable Presence—through *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*;—the unifier and atoner of sharply contrasted worships. It passes, personified in *Pippa,*—this same winning wonder-working Grace of divine goodness which Churches exist to reflect,—a power of recovery whose simple overshadowing is enough to make it New Year's

Day for souls of every kind — for Ottima and Sebald, for Jules the artist, and Luigi the patriot —and even avails to save the poor plotting Bishop on the edge of a great treachery.

Now might not the ecclesiastical mind learn something more than has been common from the Poetry which has so often proved both refuge and pulpit for the true genius of Religion ? Perhaps it is really worth the Church's serious consideration whether the poet, like the prophet, should not be credited with a certain skill in arms in defence of vital Christianity not always given to theological experts. At all events, the suggestion finds support in weightier words than mine spoken forty years ago with a wider intention. They were written by one not more at home in the mazes of theology than in the fields of natural science.

"It is a progress and a gain to the Church to have to discern and follow The Way, not only as He is manifest in the chosen Body which bears His name, but as He abides hidden in the wide outlying universe of human action and knowledge. For so only can the Church fulfil its task of moulding the future of human welfare. It is a progress and a gain to the Church to have to go forward in the Spirit, making continual experience that the Guide sent by the Son from the Father will never fail to hallow, to unite, and to enlighten that Body which is bold in faith to make free use of all its heavenly endowments, and in faith to draw needful supplies from every quarter, so long as it advances along the Way that is Christ. . . . For the Church, as for the first disciples, what lies before differs widely from what

lies behind; but that which runs through both is the One Way, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; to be traced and to be followed in unflinching loyalty through whatsoever unlooked-for windings it leads, among the unfolding hopes or fears of the ages yet to come." [1]

The way is long and difficult "until we all attain unto the unity of the Faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." This achievement is a goal which perhaps will always seem to be more distant the further we advance; until the perfect is actually come. But our immediate task is clear, namely, to learn

> "Our proper play with truth in part, before
> Entrusted with the whole."

For this learning, the neglect of one school only is fatal—the school of Christ Himself. Every effort, for example, to distinguish true from false in the development of doctrine will be vain unless in making it we follow in His steps. The peculiar originality of the Master's teaching is seen less in any entirely new sayings than in the certainty of His discriminating touch, as He moved among the treasures of earlier revelation and relieved them of the dust of time, and the lumber of unauthorised entanglements. The kind of religious evolution to which Jesus set the seal of His authority tends always to simplify and not to complicate.

[1] Dr. Hort's *Hulsean Lectures* for 1871.

To this simplifying power, so irresistible when its ethical emphasis is fortified by character in the teacher, the initial impetus of Christianity was due. It repelled none who had the ears to hear and the will to obey. The winnowing fan of Christ never gave offence, save only to *moral blindness*. In every other case His appeal to man's moral sense was too direct and sure to miss its aim. But because there were glosses and inventions which obscured the true proportion of truth, He was bound to brush them aside, and thus excite implacable enmity in those "blind guides" who make void the word of God in order to exalt the traditions of men.

The emphasis of all Christ's teaching invariably fell on those divine essentials which evidence themselves by their own inherent power to inspire. Then the use Christ made of contemporary ways of thought, notably in spiritualising current Messianic beliefs, seems eminently suggestive of an attitude not often conspicuous in the Church. When the prevailing trend of the best thought in the whole civilised world is seen to move in one direction, and one wholly favourable to the deepest currents in religion—when philosophy is so definitely tending to become more and more a philosophy of the spirit—when psychology, albeit the youngest of the sciences, shows itself plainly born to a vigorous career and lasting influence—ought not such

a mental drift to be taken more fully into account in theological appeal to the twentieth century? Even if the Church at large is not yet convinced that the religion of the future will be a religion of the Spirit, yet it need not go on throwing the same old mediæval emphasis on the sanctions of external authority, after the sceptre has already passed to the judgments of inward experience and moral intuition. Since it was to these last that Christ Himself appealed, the Church would only be reverting to the method and practice of her Lord, in meeting this reasonable demand of current thought.

Again, in the evidential treatment of Religion, there is no doubt a teleology which is still cogent; but that is not the argument from design in the form in which Paley, for instance, left it. It is no strength to the Church even to *appear* to regard human thought as having stood still, like Joshua's sun, in order to keep *Paley's Evidences* evidential. For this is to give away the truth that the world-order is still a Realm of Ends, to which all evolutionary processes contribute, and which they in no wise contradict. Once more; when miracles have become less easy of acceptance than almost any wonder they are cited to attest, we must expect that evidence for miracle, especially that drawn from ages when most things were habitually explained on this hypothesis, will leave

men cold to-day. Hence the question meets us whether the power of God unto salvation might not commend itself more to every man's conscience, if the Church's attitude on the whole subject of the miraculous were more consciously assimilated to that of the Church's Lord. During Christ's own ministry He was continually drawing men's thoughts away from the indulgence of a natural appetite for prodigy, in order to fix them on the plain every-day duty of achieving likeness to God in character (which no magic can effect), and on forwarding God's kingdom by making reason, justice, and the will of God prevail over violence and selfishness. The frequent reproach : " Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe," no less than the downright declaration : " If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," make heavily against our putting the smallest trust in superstition as a possible aid to Faith.

The conclusion, in short, at which this chapter drives, is mainly this : that whether our task is to maintain an existing accord, or to regain a unity that is lost, the one conceivable Centre-point is Jesus Christ our Lord. His principles and method are in themselves a fountain of unity. Nor can His Church on earth fulfil its intended purpose as a nucleus for the unification of human life except as it appears to the world as a manifest

embodiment of the Spirit of its Founder. No feature of the present situation is more tragic than the fact that the appointed heir and dispenser of Christ's unifying Spirit—of His Divine faculty, through sheer love and goodness, to draw the heart of mankind to Himself—seems powerless to manifest that Spirit to the world so that in hearing and seeing the Church men are able to feel that they do in some degree hear the accents and see the wholeness of Christ Himself. They see, instead, a revolting picture of dismemberment; they hear a divided utterance reflecting the weakness of contradictory counsels.

Of these torn limbs there can only be one eventual resetting;—of these discordances only one possible unification. Every Eden is lost through disobedience; and Unity can no more be regained than Paradise while the aim of each separated fold is mainly to fasten elsewhere all blame for a common fall. No Church, however venerable, is in a position to assume the prerogative any more than the holiness of Christ. To Him alone, from one and all, are penitence and subjection due. Every Church—every part of the One Church—should forthwith "turn again" with Petrine enthusiasm, and with Pauline understanding of its infinite significance, to the old Apostolic ideal: "The Body is CHRIST." For in that figure lies the seed of all. It reveals the unity of which

one has well said: "It finds a place for everyone and keeps everyone in his place. It destroys not individuals but individualism. It transmutes self-assertion into self-devotion. It counts Charity, that is the spirit of membership, above all spiritual gifts. It creates an efficiency and generates a force which transcends all efforts of all individuals, and which in the end will be irresistible. It presents a living Christ to the world—a living and growing Christ, embodied in the lives of His members, gathering up all the individuals of humanity into the ultimate unity of God's One Man. And so it offers a new philosophy of human life, and with it a new human hope, as certain of fulfilment as is the purpose of God."[1]

[1] Dean Robinson, *Address to Lambeth Conference*, 1908.

CHAPTER IX

RECONCILIATION

THIS chapter must close our attempt to review the circumstances tending to prolong the scandal of disunion which weakens the witness of Christendom for Christ and for the Kingdom He proclaimed. We have faced the actual fact that Christianity is no longer represented by a Church but by a collection of Churches, and seen reason for believing that a movement for general recovery should be initiated by definite and practical steps on the part of the more progressive Christian societies which do not repudiate the Reformation. It has been urged that some obstacles have been magnified unduly through the ascendancy of habit over the mind; that no mere craving for symmetry in system is valid ground for spiritual estrangement; and that some institutional demands are less exigent in reality than they are often made to appear. Where the framework of organisation is most rigid, unity of spirit naturally encounters the greatest difficulty.

Nevertheless, to keep closed the lines of communication, which require free cooperation in work and press for nearer fellowship in the spirit, between episcopally governed Churches and the rest, is not the way to create the just appreciation of the value of the historic episcopate for which Anglicanism contends, and which a federalised Free Church might well come to desire not only for the sake of unity but upon its merits.

Unfortunately it remains true that, although we all admire unity as an ideal, although we may even admit urgency for increased cooperation and that heightened sense of fellowship which grows out of it, yet directly some definite practical proposal is suggested, a whole ambushed army of objections leaps out in opposition, and the very way of peace becomes a new arena of strife.

Dragon's teeth, sown in the feuds of long ago when disputes now dead were vital issues demanding fiery decision, spring up in living violence to hinder and to mock. Think, for instance, of those retaliatory recollections which haunt even one single day—the ill-omened festival by a curious irony traditionally connected with the Israelite indeed in whom was no guile. St. Bartholomew's Day was not only disfigured by the dire treachery of the awful massacre in Paris and other great towns of Papal France, in the bloody dawn of August 24th, 1572; but again by the cruel ejectment of Anglican

clergy and the proscription of the Book of Common Prayer, also dated August 24th, in the year 1645; and yet once more by the retributive ejectment, no less harsh if less unjust, which was finally enforced, under the new Act of Uniformity, on August 24th, 1662. It would seem that the ghosts of these Black Bartholomews of the past still walk among us. For the miserable dissidences they recall still paralyse and divide the labourers in the great world-field where harvest after harvest has whitened and waited ever since the Lord sent forth His reapers to join in one united work. Estrangement has generated rancour and fomented strife. Mere family disputes have been magnified into momentous grounds for cleavage and separation. Then the habit, which separation tends to ingrain, of stressing accidentals at the cost of essentials, goes on hardening by these false emphases the frontiers of every breach.

But the encouraging thing is that, despite all, a most remarkable movement of feeling and aspiration after combined work and worship now prevails in all reformed Communions; and this loudly calls for simultaneous and sympathetic action on the part of every Christian body. There is every sign that a new sense of the efficacy of unity is abroad; only waiting to be focussed and embodied in order to create an immense accession of power for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ. Since such

a movement can only originate in Heaven, any Church claiming to be led by the Spirit of God should be eager to meet it. The kind of recognition that evaporates in sentiment is of little use; for it cannot break up the ice of estrangement. It is always action that talks. When the spirit of unity begins to take shape in a definite concrete form, then men begin to realise its presence. Continual delay is dangerous, not only because impressions unacted upon die, but because there is a tide in the fortunes of religion as well as in things mundane which needs to be taken at the flood. What if this flood-point for our own day be close upon us? What if an altogether unprecedented future for the Reformed Churches should hang upon a generous handling of this God-given opportunity?

Our good Anglican rulers may no doubt be trusted to make haste slowly. But it is no less important that prudence and caution should be clearly distinguishable from immobility. Some adaptation of the Federal principle which has worked such wonders for the welfare of the Empire seems clearly to be applicable to the crying needs of the Christian Church. Even now we cannot fully realise whereunto may grow the happy relations thus secured between an independent Greater Britain and the Motherland. How infinitely fruitful in the future those relations are destined to become we cannot tell; but the first-fruits fully indicate the quality

if not the extent of the harvest. In the free exchange of counsel between leaders; in the increase of effective power from a pooling of devotion for a united aim; in the conquests of free cooperation over envious self-interest and discontent; we see what good will as a definite policy can do. And if even an imperfectly developed Federal Union among practically independent nations can effect so much for political advantage; why may not Churches, finding the wisdom and charity to use the same great principle, effect similar gains for true religion?

Bishop Roots of Hankow has recently coupled together the persistence of our unhappy Divisions with the problems raised by the War as both "manifestly insoluble by human ingenuity," and therefore only to be met by prayer. No doubt the Bishop is right; but even prayer will solve no problems unless the terms of its successful exercise are fulfilled. The charter of Christian prayer runs thus: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be." The imposed condition pledges the prayerful to complete coordination of their will and desire with the will of God revealed in Christ. And where—as in the case of unity—that will is plainly declared, it certainly behoves us to search most carefully lest any *lack* of human ingenuity, in making an answer possible, cause our prayer to fail. The

will to do God's will is no less necessary to fruitful prayer than it is to the knowledge of true doctrine. It seems to open a tremendous question for the ecclesiastical conscience how far difference in opinion, or preference in matters of organisation, ought to be allowed, by men in whom the words of Christ abide, to hinder the advance of the Kingdom of God. And when the Central Council of the National Mission propound the penetrating question: "Why is the Church throughout England not that effective spiritual force and moral witness that it is meant to be?" it should set us of the Anglican Communion seriously thinking whether "as much as lieth in us" has been done to raise this whole matter of Christian disunion into the region of the Spirit, where the Founder of our Faith taught His disciples to resolve such perennial problems as that of men who cast out devils in Christ's Name yet "follow not with us."

Our liturgy sees in the blessed company of all faithful people the mystical Body of Christ. If it be the traditional impedimenta of ages, and not the truth as it is in Jesus, which hinders or divides this company from spiritual unity in worship or in work, we cannot think our part yet done towards a resurrection of godly union and concord. We cannot raise the dead; but God will not act till we have done what we can: "Roll ye away the stone." He expects from us human ingenuity to reduce the

blocking burden of controversy to the minimum of absolutely necessary things. He waits to be gracious until we realise how many of our divisions turn upon dead issues, and confess that none of them could survive an hour of that larger air where a love of God that limits our love to man is seen to be the contradiction in terms it actually is. Meanwhile the word of Christ abiding in us seems to be insistent that we should not seek the basis of Christian unity on the plane where intellectual or systematic differences appear to govern life, but in that deeper region of the spirit whither the real seat of government in religion, no less than in philosophy, is continually being transferred.

If the Christian mind would more generally exercise itself in this region, a wonderful reduction in acrimony would result. We all need to revert to the spiritual conception of the true essence of "schism," so evident in St. Paul's treatment of the subject in his Corinthian letter. We have acquired the idea that the greatest crime of schismatic division consists in separation from this or that external organisation; whereas in the apostolic view all the worst elements of schism might be present without any rending of the organisation. The essence of the sin was the spiritual temper which breeds division. "The Body of Christ" is a *spiritual* organism; "for by One Spirit are we all baptized into One Body, and have all been

made to drink into One Spirit ; " hence the very core of the sin of schism consists in the divisive spirit of faction wherever it appears. A display of this schismatic spirit within a single organisation may well be a more evil force, and a worse sin, than giving the countenance of membership to an inherited corporate separation, whose chief criminality consists in its tendency to legitimise and perpetuate some crystallised fruit of the spirit of division. We shall never learn " all to speak the same thing and become perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment, without divisions," as the Apostle entreats [1] ; unless we understand with him that there are, and ought to be, " diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit ; diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord ; diversities of workings, but the same God Who worketh all things in all." [2] The various word of wisdom and of knowledge ; the various gift of faith, of healing, of powers, of prophecy, of discerning and interpretation ; " all these worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will ; " and all for the one overmastering, all inclusive purpose, namely, " the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal."

Now, have we yet acted in keeping with the familiar argument from analogy that follows ?[3] Do we believe that as with the human body so with

[1] i Cor. i, 10. [2] i Cor. xii, 4–11. [3] i Cor. xii, 12–30.

this Body of Christ baptized into One Spirit, "the body is not one member but many"? that even "if the foot *say*, 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body,' it is not therefore not of the body"? Or are we all (conformers and non-conformers alike) behaving as those Corinthians who allowed the eye to say to the hand, "I have no need of thee," or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you"? But, says Paul, "God tempered the body together, that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." So the great argument goes on, against the fatal human disposition to disparage the diversity *through which unity is perfected*,—against the tendency to reject the prophet because he is not an apostle, the teacher because he is not a prophet, the healer because he is not strong in wise councils, the gifted ruler because he cannot heal. Thus our minds are prepared for a plunge into the renewing flood of panegyric on the one way more excellent than all gifts, and greater than all graces;—the way of Love that never faileth, even when that which is in part is done away and that which is perfect is come.

During the long ages of this transition, it is only by continual rebaptism in that river of God that we can hope to rid ourselves of those discordances which belong to immaturity, and often spring from

the fictitious importance we attach to "childish things," and from the dim sight of our imperfect knowledge. Take, for example, the ecclesiastical problems which converge so acutely on the ancient trouble of finding a *modus vivendi* for prophet and priest. Can we not yet understand that it is not God's will to exclude from the unity of the Body of Christ either element of which these offices are representative? The God of the Church and the God of human nature are one God; and "the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal" is intended to provide for both the great types under which the mentality of mankind is actually ranged. "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the seeing? If the various members were one member, where were the body?" So neither the intuitionalist, nor the traditionalist, is authorised to say, "I have no need of thee." The plain truth is that the members of each of these great mental groups are necessary to the efficiency of the Church, to the completeness of the Body. The mischief only begins when the aspect of truth seen most clearly by each is regarded as the sole presentment of any value for the world's salvation. Then, on the one hand, we have ordinances and organisations made ends in themselves, instead of means of grace; while, on the other, liberty of prophesying and the free access of every soul to

God appear as if they were hostile to the no less Pauline principles of decency and order.

It is worth while trying to visualise the two great types of mind which divide the world of religious thought, and are so easily made more hopelessly incompatible than they really are. The prophetic type, which predominates in all Reformed Communions, will always be more strongly moved by the actualities of experience than by the prestige of ecclesiastical authority. Where grapes or figs are produced, minds of this sort are simply incapable of degrading the producing tree into a thistle or a thorn. This presents itself as an injustice from which they intuitively shrink. Loyalty to the Spirit of Christ will always mean more to them than any fidelity to an external organisation, however well accredited. Religion relates itself chiefly with an inner attitude of mind, an innermost life of feeling. They value creeds rather as embodiments of Christian experience than as results of an intellectual process. For such men, the law of spiritual liberty takes precedence of any law that ecclesiastical tradition can possibly impose. They cannot accept the static conception of theology. Scholasticism and all its works are to them vain things, whether expounded by an Aquinas or a Calvin. Christianity appeals to them not as a code, or a system, but as inspiration and enablement for a certain kind of life. Of this type are they

whose mission it is to wean the Church from the impossible task of trying to make people think alike on a wide range of doubtful matter, to the certainly less barren, and perhaps more feasible, aim of combining them in action to suppress evils on which all good men are agreed. Perhaps no Church of to-day has been quite so careful to make room for this sort of mind as was the Founder of our Faith when He put first the will to do the will of God, and knowledge of the doctrine second. But while His Spirit lives we may take it as sure that a growing host, and among them much of the salt of the earth, would rather see a revaluation of all Churches and their customs than lose an improved chance of making Christianity more truly effective in advancing the Kingdom of God.

At the opposite pole is the ecclesiastical mind. For its classical expression one could not improve on the dictum of the English Cardinal for whom the very reference of a theological question to history appeared heretical. And for its ripest fruit we may conformably turn to the great Roman example of contradiction in terms—the practice of *Catholic exclusiveness*. This is not a mental type well fitted for survival in the modern world; but it still distinguishes a very large section of religious opinion which is apt to see little beauty in Truth unless accompanied by a halo of sacerdotal restriction. Wherever Catholicism has come to mean

clericalism, the unity of the body, and the value of free spiritual development in the living, growing Christian consciousness, weigh less than the necessity of maintaining hierarchical prestige. Of this mind are the Lauds, whether of the seventeenth century or of to-day, who desecrate the altar of unity with human sacrifices to uniformity. They cannot see that to misread human nature and make a mere party of the Church is to wreck its power and destroy its spiritual hold upon the world. Give them a Star Chamber, and they will go on trying to enforce impossible policies of Thorough, until at last some blazing indiscretion, like the old Etcetera oath, consumes them together with the factious fabric of their narrow zeal.

It would be the salvation of this sort of mind (here pictured in an extreme form) if it could extend "the largeness and comprehensiveness" of its catholicity so as to do reasonable justice to the opposite kind of intelligence which greatly predominates in the modern world. No policy of uniformity and exclusion can possibly succeed: only one of unity and comprehension. Priest and prophet must be recognised as counterparts in an ideal completeness, not regarded as irreconcilable elements one of which must be extruded. The greatness of Christianity is as yet very imperfectly realised. The twentieth century is even now in travail with, but not yet delivered of, a more

truly *catholic* Christianity. The Church is only just beginning to realise the inadequacy of the partial patterns its divisions have deceived it into mistaking for perfect models. Consequently it oscillates between several ideals—primitive, patristic, mediæval, modern—instead of tackling the hard work of synthesis, which, however, cannot be evaded. For only by a tremendous effort of single-minded sincerity can that which is spiritual enough to be essential, and therefore abiding, be recovered out of the experience of each period, and comprehended in a genuine Catholicism, neither new nor old but ageless and æonian, and fitted to constitute not the creed and system only but the *life* of the Universal Church of the future.

To this, not different periods only, but various regions have contribution to make; and we must see that such help is not despised. To mention a single instance only: what has come to be commonly called "the Russian Christ" is practically a stranger to Anglo-Saxon, Teuton, and Latin Christianity. Has He nothing to teach us? In the religion of the average Russian the idea of the Love of God swallows everything. It is just where he is strong that we are weak. Because we put the second law of Christianity first, we fail in obeying that, besides neglecting the other. When we grasp why our Lord united the two, and why He put the Divine before the human duty, we shall

begin in very deed to find how "Love is the fulfilment of the law." Westcott told the secret of the most powerful of all combinations in the alchemy of the soul when he said of Christian life, that while its object is Service, its strength is Communion with God. Englishmen have much to learn from Dostoievsky's Father Zossima, and his like. We Western people are too ready to go for the object, while neglecting the strength. When the average Russian, who practises the power, learns to direct it right, he will outstrip us all.

This is only a particular instance of the immeasurable need for Churches and Nations to learn of one another.[1] It may perhaps serve to illustrate the importance of the general law that a revival of true religion is best promoted by fearlessly seeking Truth wherever it may be found. Those who have accomplished most in renewing the vitality of the Faith have always been the men and women who most believed in the ever present power of the Spirit to reveal the things of God. They held that new knowledge of Christ was always to be learnt, and that new works for Him had always to be undertaken, as each age could bear the truth. They believed that the Way, and the Guide along the way, which Christ revealed together, might never be divorced. They felt that what makes the Way

[1] Think how much India might teach us had we the wit to learn.

applicable to all ages and true for all time is the underlying Divine purpose not merely to meet a current want, but to raise to a higher level of truth the whole manner of men's thinking at whatever stage of perception they may stand. They realised how much of Christianity is always in the future; and that *we only come to know what is Christian as we do what is right.* They saw Christ standing always above and beyond the experience He illumined; and knew that every advance would mean also a further increase of light. They all would say, with Dr. Hort, "We see at each stage a little beyond what we have attained; but never more. Fresh insight comes always and only as the reward of fresh attainment."

Now the fresh attainment immediately inviting Christendom is the translation into definite and visible movement of the truth we are daily coming to see—that the Church of Christ exists to win the world to the obedience of Christ and the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven, rather than merely to loyalty to an organisation which can but partially represent the Faith. And as this world to be won consists of every sort of mind, in every possible stage of education, the only conceivable kind of appeal likely to succeed on a large scale is that which is mainly concerned with the spirit of man. This spirit lies deeper in human nature than the

plane of nearly all religious difference; and at the same time governs all the issues of conduct and character. By no possible conjuring with antique tradition, mediæval trappings and superseded precepts, can the world be persuaded that the office of the Church is to dragoon men into thinking to one pattern. The Church will continue to stand or fall in their eyes according to its power to touch the secret springs of character and nourish the spiritual life. This felt necessity lies at the root of all the present religious unrest. Men who hunger for the Christianity of Christ (which the Churches are now reduced to defending by the admission that it has not yet been tried) can never be interested in the message of any organisation showing itself keener to establish a monopoly in the bit of truth for which it stands than in saying—"Come, unite with us in one fellowship of the spirit; let us learn together the strength of communion with God, and the joy of joint work in the service of man."

Institutional Christianity, in all its forms, especially calls for the exercise of periodical self-examination, on account of a prevailing tendency in all means gradually to take the place of the end they serve. This duty of the Church, which involves self-searching of the deepest kind, sets in warning light the terrible responsibility of preferring binding

before loosing—of a disposition to assume the rôle of an excluding body, instead of one eager to comprehend and welcome wanderers.

In a day of belief in the survival of the fittest, we cannot fear the final permanence of that counterfeit and caricature of Catholicity which narrows the range and blocks the cooperation of Churches that bear Christ's name and demonstrably do His work. A generation heartily sick, not only of discord and division, but of all exaggeration of family differences into matters of life and death, is already in revolt against any and every conception of the Church of Christ which fails to regard it as the flexible and responsive organ of His Spirit—the living custodian of "the things He said," about which it is scarcely possible, even for separatists, to differ. The world is well aware that this Christ, nominally the core of every heart and the cynosure of every eye in Christendom, did actually bring to this sad earth a new revealing of Grace in one hand and of Truth in the other, and did so bind them about with His infinite love, that no soul, however weary and heavy laden with pharisaic lore, needed thenceforth to fail of rest. Hence those frequent questionings and reproaches addressed to a Christendom which cannot cast out devils as the Master did; and, even with the help of prayer and fasting, cannot purify social or international life, nor restore a demented world to sanity and sense.

Is it not the fact that, while all the Churches have talked Christ's gospel till the whole glorious evangel has become a platitude,—while they have hidden its light under a hundred things that can neither profit nor deliver,—they have never seriously attempted the application of its ideal ?

Let us hope that the insight and courage of Mr. Neville Talbot's pre-war prophesying *On the Modern Situation*—so luridly illuminated since—may bear the fruit its faith and hope deserve. Before the crash came, he realised that there was no chance for Christian morals to survive disbelief in CHRIST :

"He has been impotent for centuries, owing to the spiritual complacency of man. . . . He has been degraded by the transformation of His revolutionary disclosure into an established and conservative tradition at truce with the world and in bondage to propriety. But now His day returns; and human hearts are loosened to receive Him. . . . The times of the impotence of Jesus Christ are passing. He was ever powerless with those who did not need Him. A knowledge of darkness is needed to urge indolent man upon the quest after the light. Once there was a bonfire lit in the world, of which the New Testament is the still flaming brand. Once men were darkness, and yet they became light in the Lord. Since then the light has been diffused into twilight, and in half-Christianised Europe generations have had no knowledge either of the light or of the darkness. But to-day all changes. The darkness of the far lands where the Gospel has never been, let alone grown old, lies close round Europe. The darkness of things seen and pleasurable lies heavy on luxurious souls. The darkness of the universe in its incomprehensible

age and vastness overcasts the vision of science. The darkness of human hearts emancipated, and void of all allegiance but to themselves, creeps ever on. Therefore to-day the light begins to shine anew, *as men begin again to know the need of it.*"

We know now—what was hidden when those burning words were penned—that Christ had to be crucified afresh, and Europe itself become a Calvary, before that sense of need to which he trusted could issue as he hoped. But the thought of all the noble lives laid down should make us utterly resolved to leave no stone unturned to realise the better world for which this enormous sacrifice is made. And as we turn again to this world-wide Christendom, with all its wealth of organisation, neither quickening nor even touching more than a mere fringe of the great masses of mankind, we feel intensely the appositeness with which our Anglican fathers call us now to mingle Repentance with our Hope. Hope calls up the vision of what influence the Church of Christ might wield, could this great house be brought to speak and act together; nay, even if, pending that far day, the Church's servants of every livery found grace to destroy the injurious, standing advertisement—By this may all men know that we are *not* Christ's disciples, because we have no love one towards another! Since all of us are guilty in this thing—for in view of the past, no Christian com-

munion is in a position to throw stones—the hope set before us must plainly hang on the repentance whose very essence is the *change of mind* whereby we forsake wrong courses and follow right ones.

In face of a Christendom proved too spiritually anæmic to avert the general relapse into barbarism of a world too long content with Culture without Christ—unless we are prepared to yield to those who tell us that the Faith itself is bankrupt—we seem bound to confess that all its great organisations must somehow have trifled with the message of power and the means of love which Jesus entrusted to His Church.

How well we know the imperishable outline drawn by the Master Himself—that timeless truth which to-day no less than of yore commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Only too terribly familiar are the inimitable strokes of the great sketch He left us to fill in, and which now His Spirit is teaching us to see was so strangely different in proportion and perspective from the picture we have made of it. Our Stewardship of Faith—of the manifold Grace of God—has fallen from the Founder's great intent. First and last, and all the time, seems wanted just that μετάνοια —afterthought, changed mind—that grips with a new fidelity the former emphases, so that at least we less lamentably fail to re-present the pristine depth of Word and Sign, with their grapple on the

innermost—the heavenly height as of the very God revealed in Christ—the mighty breadth, so human, so divine, as of infinite arms outstretched to reconcile, embrace, and comprehend.

Not one of those terms we know so well can we so much as utter without a bitter consciousness of shame. What is the meaning of the Fatherhood of God without its correlate—the Brotherhood of Man? Where is the kingdom of Righteousness with its consequent, but not preceding, Peace? We have so misunderstood that immortal mystery of Love we call the Cross of Christ, that still the world is unredeemed. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Is it Christ that has failed, or His Church? His supreme uplifting had never even seemed to be in vain, if His Body, through the ages, as also even here and now, had not miserably failed to fill up that which was behindhand of His sufferings, and to incarnate His spirit of devotion to the service of men.

Besides its own failure in unity, with which these pages have been concerned, the two spheres in which the impotence of Christendom in influencing human relations has been most marked are the Social and International. Mr. Temple is very probably right in saying that "the Church cannot be more than a limited distance ahead of the society in which its members live." He thinks that is why

the early Church tolerated slavery, and the contemporary Church tolerates sweating. But he is certainly right to remind us that more is here involved than the loss of influence at home. These social neglects paralyse the spread of the Faith abroad as well as at home. There exists a Hindu journal which lately published from time to time accounts of the slums of our great towns, and added on each occasion the refrain—"This is what Christianity has done for England; do you want it here?"

As to international relations, we are seeing just now nations obliterated, liberties outraged, and all that is best in the traditions of mankind deliberately deflowered. Into this unprecedented orgy of scientific murder we were in honour bound to plunge, not only on the principle of the lesser of two evils, but on the positively Christian principle of resistance to evil even unto blood. But we should make the gravest mistake were we to allow this to blind us to the universal responsibility of Christendom at large for not having done, long ago, as much as it should and could have done to save the world from an entanglement with evil from which escape presently became impossible without the use of evil means. Armageddon itself is a colossal reminder of Christendom's failure to infect the world with a higher spirit than the world can produce. Here is no case of the Church being "a limited distance

ahead " of the society in which its members live ; it has not shown itself to be ahead at all. While every nation has gone on burning incense to Thor and Odin—proclaiming war to be not only the one inevitable, but the natural and lawful " continuation of policy "—this whole vast agency entrusted with the Gospel of God's will, this Church of the living God, which was to be the pillar and stay of the Truth, has been organised, at best, for nothing higher than the rôle of spectator ; at worst, as an inflamer of nationalistic feeling, whether right or wrong. Yet how could it be otherwise ?—so long as this very same principle of exclusiveness and aggrandisement, which dominates political theory and practice, is the exact counterpart in secular life of the spirit of disunion and separatism which has informed the Churches themselves.

The regeneration of the world awaits the regeneration of the Church. The history of the Church is the story of a Divine Idea creating a great Organisation : that is Book I. Book II shows the great Organisation usurping the place of the Idea it was created to spread, until mankind rose up to resent the substitution, and God began to fulfil Himself in other ways. The contents of Book III will depend on the course next taken by the Church —on whether it has vision to interpret this time, and grace to obey that eternal Spirit of Holiness and Love, whose ways, because they are Divine,

exceed the measures of man's mind. They refuse to run only in our prepared ecclesiastical moulds. And because they are so unconfined, they appear to us to be inscrutable. But our wisdom is not to oppose but to try to apprehend them; even though they overflow accustomed channels, and seek to uplift all worships, tending ever toward that universal unity which is the will of God.

Repentance is undoubtedly the door of Hope. The emplacements of bigotry need very high explosive. Nothing short of a revolution of thought can settle this account. This war of the spirit may be long, but the victory is sure; for God is Light and God is Love. And those who are workers together with Him can have no doubt as to what Spirit they are of, nor as to the first principle which must actuate their whole attitude and aim. It is the very principle laid down in the Lambeth Encyclical of a few years ago: "We must set before us the Church of Christ as He would have it; one spirit, one body; enriched with all those elements of Divine truth which the separated communities of Christians now emphasise severally; strengthened by the interaction of all the gifts and graces which our divisions now hold asunder; filled with all the fulness of God."

It is simple obedience to the vision of the Church of Christ as He would have it which should decide the action and policy of any living portion of His

body to-day. More important than any evidence dug from the lore of the past, more binding than any mediæval precedent, more imperative than the most united user of the ages, is the living voice of the Church's Lord, charging us afresh to read the signs of our time, and interpret in the light of clamant human need "what the Spirit *saith* unto the Churches." Who can be deaf to the clangorous call of events? The time cries out for means by which even the self-banished may no longer feel themselves expelled—for a gathering together of those scattered powers so miserably enfeebled by division—for a victorious union of all the gifts and graces now held asunder—for a grand combine of the forces of the Spirit against every evil Anti-christian stronghold.

He is even now taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us afresh. He is reminding us of the unifying principle, the life, the spirit, the ideal, the very Christ Himself we have been disregarding. To Him indeed the Church must again and again return to adjust her compass, and settle her standards, whether of ethics, of doctrine, or of polity. Only so can the regenerating and redemptive power of true religion discover itself invincibly to the world. Only so can the living theology of a living Church continue to manifest the essential spiritual truth which both exist to express and enshrine. Reunion is inextricably connected with

Restatement. The Church which persists in ways of thought that have grown old—which goes on building on imaginary facts, and making a fetish of antiquated theories—thereby dooms itself to decay. It becomes an example of the destructive conservatism which conserves external forms and adjuncts, while it lets go the germinative spiritual principle on which the future of the Faith depends.

Finally; we may be sure that the measure of the absoluteness of any Church's belief in the Holy Ghost will be the measure of the help it can render in restoring the broken unities of human life. For it is only by the Holy Ghost that men so call Christ Lord as to obey His will, and give effect to the unifying principles of His life and death. The scattered membership of Christ's Body makes it now impotent and ineffectual with the world—compared with what it might be, even dead. So once an ancient prophet saw the chosen people in his vision of the valley strewn with dry and separated bones. But by the power of God's Spirit breathing on those slain, they presently rose up an exceeding great army, instinct with a common life.

"It is the SPIRIT that quickeneth," not the flesh. It is He—the Lord, and the Giver of Life—Who with the freedom of God's wind, raises up spiritual children to the Father,—who may, or may not, be of Abraham's seed. It is He who is always

arraigning our principles of judgment and discrimination, and demanding of every man's conscience "righteous judgment." He calls up Christ's own picture of the great day of acceptance and rejection, and points to the ruling we profess to count Divine in the matter of separation and division. He shows us the children of the Kingdom sifted, not according to their naming of the Name, but according to their doing of the Will. And on our very fidelity to Him, for whom service was the test of life, He charges us to discriminate the faithful accordingly.

In the Mind of God, as revealed by Christ, what must be the paramount solicitude concerning any Church Institution? What but an unspeakable longing for it to prove worthy of His own great Universal Church of all sincere spirits and pure hearts who worship Him in spirit and in truth? What but a changeless and divine desire that no arid insistence on canonical exactitude dishonour or deny the chartered and Christly succession of the helpers and healers of mankind?

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